Find what you want on the Web

thenet

thenet

AUGUST 2000 £2.50

What Website?
1000s of sites reviewed
★★★★★

DIGITAL DJs HERE WE GO!

Tune in to 9000 radio stations over the Web

SURFING CHEFS
We test the top cookery sites

SARA COX
IT'S RADIO 1 ONLINE!
www.bbc.co.uk/radio1

HERE COME THE E-BOOKS
Put your novel online

MOVE OVER, MAHIR
You want fame?
Then use the Net!

PLUS!
Interactive pant purchase
Flat-panel monitors
Mr MP3.com
Websites for cheats
Nudist holidays
...and the man who caught evil Glitter

9 771466 361011 08

BRITAIN'S BEST-SELLING INTERNET MAGAZINE!

stepbystep The pain-free guide to getting online

BT Stay in touch

Shop till you drop

Unlimited surfing every evening and weekend with BT Internet

Exciting auctions, last minute offers, exclusive services, great deals plus emailing, music, news, gossip, chat and boundless information.

Now you can enjoy shopping and everything else on the Internet without worrying about the bill.

With BT Internet, for just £9.99 a month, you can go online every evening and at weekends without paying call charges. You can surf at any other time and only local call charges will apply.*

For unlimited surfing with BT Internet all you have to do is contact us on 0800 800 001 or visit us at www.btinternet.com and we'll send you a free disc to load into your computer. Then you just follow a few simple instructions and you're away.

And because BT is building for the net generation, we will always be around to help you get the most out of being online.

Visit www.btinternet.com or call 0800 800 001

BT Internet

*No call charges using 0800 number 6pm to 12 midnight Monday to Thursday, and 6pm Friday to 12 midnight Sunday. Local call charges apply at all other times. 24-hour helpdesk charged at 50p/min. Payment by Visa, Delta or Mastercard only. E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial™ & ©Universal Studios.

thenet

Flick before you click

WORDS AND PICTURES

Editor Matthew Bingham
Art Editor Paul Yelland
Deputy Editor Sue Weekes
Listings Editor Robert Jeffery
Deputy Art Editor Tatiana Okorie
Designer Phil Madge
Staff Writer Gary Parkinson
Picture Editor Richard Lawrence
Chief Sub-editor Claire McHattie
Sub-editor Sarah Wakely
Web Site Editor Paul Winslow
Contributors Jon Casimir, Alan Eldridge, Roger Gann, John Gosling, Danny Graydon, Chris Hadley, Sean Hargrave, Stuart Harrison, Rian Hughes, Guy Jordan, Cliff Joseph, Shaun Marin, Dave Mclaughlin, John Mullen, Steve Orino, Sarah Ramsden, Richard Tippett, Victoria Williams, Nick Wright
Editorial Secretary Hazel van Wieringen

THE ADVERTS

Group Ad Manager Rachael Coles
Ad Manager Jason Dear
Assistant Ad Manager Matthew Warren
Senior Sales Executives Victor Reis, Geneve Stennett
Classified Sales David Ward-Penny
Secretary Joanna Mason

PRODUCTION

Group Production Manager Meurig Evans
Production Manager Darren Jones

SUITS

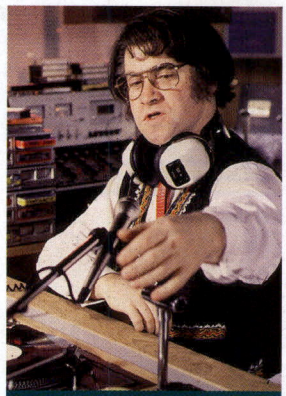
Group Editor Mark Payton
Publishing Director Kevin Costello
Associate Publisher Emma Lees
Publishing Manager Sharon Todd
Head of Trade Marketing Sarah Magraw
Subs Marketing Manager Matthew Banks
Subscriptions Executive Joi Chuku

UPSTAIRS

Chairman Simon Taylor
Managing Director Eric Verdon-Roe
Editorial Director Mel Nichols
Design Director Paul Harpin
Finance Director Brian Freeman

Contact us *the net*, 38-42 Hampton Road, Teddington, Middlesex TW11 0JE, United Kingdom
Email ***thenetnow@haynet.com***
Telephone 020 8943 5000 **Editorial** 020 8943 5980
Advertisements 020 8943 5015
Fax Advertising 020 8943 5815 **Editorial** 020 8943 5819
Subscriptions 01795 414807

© Haymarket Magazines 2000. *the net* is published by Haymarket Consumer Electronic Publications Limited. Reproduction by Graphic Facilities, Unit 2, Maverton Road Industrial Estate, London E3; printed by E T Heron, The Bentall Complex, Colchester Road, Heybridge, Maldon, Essex SM9 7NW. Distributed by Frontline Ltd, Park House, 117 Park Road, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire PE1 2TR. Tel: 01733 555161. **Subscriptions** rates UK: 12 issues £30; Europe: £52.50; Zone 1: £77; Zone 2: £88. PO Box 280, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8FB. Tel: 01795 414807; fax: 01795 414555 **Back issues** £3.50 each PO Box 280, Sittingbourne, Kent ME9 8FB Tel: 01795 414807 fax: 01795 414555 All rights reserved. This publication may not be reproduced or transmitted in any form in whole or in part without the written prior permission of the publishers. Every care has been taken in the preparation of this magazine, but the publishers cannot be held responsible for the accuracy of the information herein, or any consequence arising from it. In product reviews, judgments have been made in the context of the equipment available to *the net* at the time and value-for-money comments are based on UK prices, which are subject to change and only applicable to the UK. ISSN 1466-3619



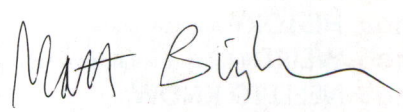
COVER PHOTOGRAPHS: STEVE POOLE/SCOPE FEATURES; STEVE SHAW/OUTLINE/KATZ. THIS PAGE: BBC

Listen in to traffic reports live from Santa Monica

The radio industry has long been forced to adopt guerilla tactics to survive in the face of flashier competitors like film, TV and the music biz. Britain's previous generation of DJs learnt their trade broadcasting from rusting pirate ships in the Irish Sea or dull-as-ditchwater Luxembourg; their hungry young replacements come from the margins of the club scene or late-night TV. That's why radio dovetails so well with the Internet – a shared idea of sniping from the sidelines, of little groups of creative anarchists sprouting up through the cracks in the pavement. And that's just Classic FM.

It's true – you can listen to Classic FM live over the Net (***www.classicfm.com***). That means the haunting tones of Henry Kelly and David Mellor can be heard on PCs across the globe, and with spanking new kit in the pipeline like the Kerbango Internet Radio, you soon won't even need a computer. Classic's just one of thousands of stations on the Web, and just as southern Californians get to enjoy their daily dose of Elgar and Vivaldi, so we can listen in to traffic reports live from Santa Monica. Find out how on page 50.

Compare the refreshing attitude of radio to that of the music and book trades, now facing up to the potential of electronic distribution. We talk to the man behind MP3.com, Michael Robertson (page 18), and read up on e-publishing (page 28). In Bachman-Turner Overdrive's words, you ain't seen nothing yet!



Matthew Bingham, **Editor**
matthew.bingham@haynet.com

thenetcontents

Don't leave your home page without us

28 INTERNET PUBLISHING
How the Web has changed the business of words

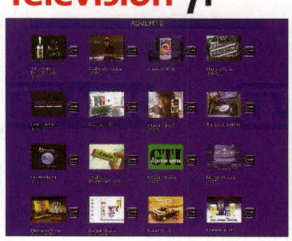
136 FLAT AS A PANCAKE
Bin your old monitor for one of these

42 COOKING UP A FEAST
The tastiest food sites on the Net

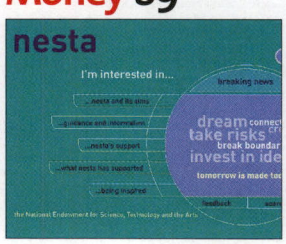
whatwebsite? Over 35 pages of great sites

66 **MOVIES** New flicks; buying online
71 **TELEVISION** Ad-tastic Web sites
72 **MUSIC** New sounds; Balearic beats
78 **SPORT** Leather against willow, and wheels against pavement
82 **TRAVEL** Where to go – in the buff
85 **NEWS AND MEDIA** Comics
89 **MONEY** Get yourself financed
91 **HOMES** Conquer those chores
92 **HEALTH** Perfect skin – online
95 **LEARNING** Become an artist
97 **KIDS** Weeeeeaahhh! Theme parks
100 **GAMES** You big cheat, you
103 **SCIENCE** Build yourself a 'bot
104 **HISTORY** Antiques online
106 **WEIRD** Bizarre scientific projects
108 **NEED TO KNOW** The bookmarks no self-respecting Internet user should be caught without

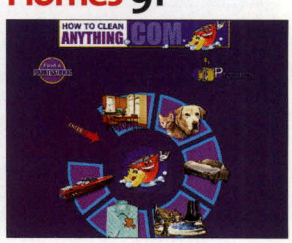
Television 71



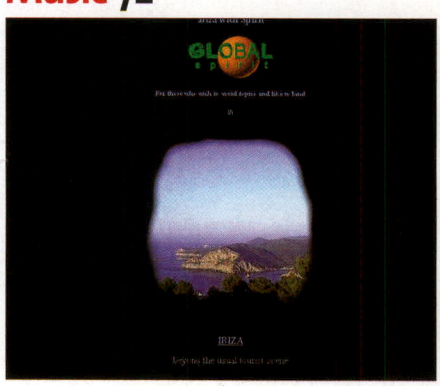
Money 89



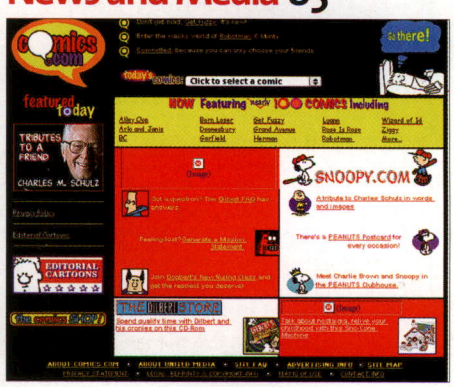
Homes 91



Music 72



News and Media 85

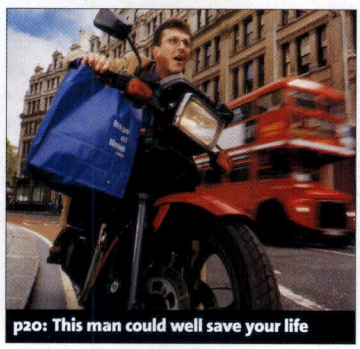


35 WHEN WILL I BE FAMOUS?
Use the Net to assist your rise to stardom

thismonth

THE NET NOW 6
Sir Isaac Newton gossip and Hansie Cronje gets a pasting. Plus the Disc-buster: the man who helped nick Glitter, Shipman and a lazy student

DAYS LIKE THESE 12
Sailing at Cowes, tennis at Wimbledon and crop circles in Wiltshire



p20: This man could well save your life

INBOX 15
Furniture in sex session shocker. Oh, and another missive from Mail Monkey

WEB ICONS 18
All praise MP3.com – they'll give you music for free!

BRIGHT SPARKS 20
CRACKING IDEAS ONLINE
A place to get stuff in a hurry (great for missed birthdays) and a site that will take care of all your digital pics

KITTED OUT 24
You thought we'd stooped low in the past but now we surpass ourselves – all the places to buy your pants on the Internet

RETAIL THERAPY 58
All the best in online shopping. This month: posh nosh, a posh penknife, a posh pen and a stag's head. Of course

BOOKMARKS 154
Hitchhiker Douglas Adams on his latest venture and his favourite sites

50 INTERNET RADIO
Get sounds from around the world

58 RETAIL THERAPY
Stag head: available on the Net!

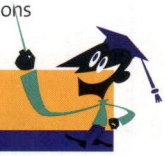
thefeatures

BOOKS WITHOUT TREES 28
Make that dream a reality and get your tatty old manuscript published. We show you how the Net is set to revolutionise the book trade

THE FAME GAME 35
Desperate to get yourself noticed? Do anything to become a star? Here's how to use the Web to get more than 15 minutes of fame...

GRUB'S UP! 42
If the best thing you can conjour up in the kitchen is a boiled egg and an awful lot of smoke, you'd better head here first. Cookery goes online!

INTERNET RADIO 50
Yes, we know you can get radio on, well, your radio. But that might soon be a thing of the past – and here's why. Plus, the best radio stations from around the world, now available on your desktop



stepbystep

Starting out > Learn more > Guru fodder

Your easy guide to all that's on the Internet

CHOOSING AN ISP Unhappy with your service provider? Looking to get onto the Net for the first time? Then consult our guide 132

HARDWARE SPECIAL Technology is getting smaller all the time. Here's our pick of the latest flat-panel monitors 136

BUSINESS TOOLS SPECIAL You aren't going to get anywhere if your business isn't online. How to get the Web presence that you and your livelihood deserve 140

BROWSERS You aren't just limited to the big boys, you know. Here are some of the feasible alternatives 144

EMAIL Email is the best way to keep in touch. We explain the whole process of getting started here 146

NEWSGROUPS Debate with those of a like-minded disposition, without the need to ever set foot out the door 148

Naughty schoolchildren pelted the shopkeeper with toffees

ISPS

BT told to toe the line

Internet users look set to benefit after UK recent watchdog decision

Telecommunications watchdog OFTEL has opened up the Internet service market, by ordering BT to offer wholesale versions of its unmetered Internet access package to rival Internet service providers.

BT has just launched its Surftime service, where users pay a set amount for unlimited access to the Internet, without any extra call charges.

BT had refused requests from other ISPs wanting to buy a wholesale version of the service which they could then sell on, instead saying that anyone wanting to offer a similar service could do so only by using a version of Surftime.

OFTEL ruled that BT must offer the service to any third party operator, effectively allowing every ISP in the country to buy circuit capacity and offer an unmetered service over BT's network. Basically, this means that more and more service providers will be able to offer unmetered access and generate their own Internet pricing structure, giving UK Internet users a greater choice and, perhaps more importantly, a reduction in their monthly phone bills.

The ruling should see Net users get more choice and a cheaper phone bill

AOL, one of the leading service providers in the UK, welcomed the decision in a prepared statement. 'This is the first pro-consumer reform benefitting the UK Internet industry. Consumers will be able to stop watching the clock while they are online and instead start focusing on quality features, service and member experience.'

Celebrity bookmarks

No13 **Hansie Cronje**

Hansie Cronje: doh!

DIEGO MARADONA

www.diegomaradona.com

The English will never despise Cronje like we do Maradona – at least the crooked Afrikaaner didn't blame the hand of God. And he may well have let us win a Test Match instead of costing us a game of football.

HOWARD LANG & PARTNERS

www.pix.za/hlp

The South African firm of solicitors could well be of use when it comes to the various Commissions and cases that Hansie is going to have to face. There are loads of links on the site to offer advice to a man down on his luck and in need of legal advice.

BLUESQUARE

www.bluesq.com

We very much doubt that anyone from Internet betting service BlueSquare would ring him in the middle of the night for advice on the state of the pitch. He could do with associating with respectable bookies for a change.

AUSTRALIAN CRICKET BOARD

www-aus.cricket.org

Cronje probably wishes he was an Aussie. When Shane Warne and Mark Waugh were caught dealing with bookies, the ACB just gave the pair a slap on the wrist.

DEVIL'S ADVOCATE

movies.warnerbros.com/devils

In Hansie's confession, he explained that 'I allowed Satan and the world to dictate terms to me'. So he could well empathise with Keanu Reeves' character in this film.

PICTURES: EMPICS, KOBAL, RETNA

Kit Live: she's a real lady!

SHOWTIME

LIVE 2000 TO HAVE KIT ON

Technology and home entertainment show Live 2000 has taken a leaf out of the Press Association's book, creating a female embodiment of the event which takes place at Earl's Court on 21-24 September. The figurehead for the show is called Kit Live, a 'smart, attractive, yet fun female figure', much like PA's Ananova newsreader – only, er, she's real.

The show focuses on technologies such as MP3, DVD, the Net, mobile technology and interactive TV. Readers of *the net* taking advantage of our subscription offer will receive a free pair of tickets to the event.

www.live2000.com

KNOWHOW

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT...?

No.13: The Microsoft break-up

Some kind of divorce?
You could say so. After a court case that seems to have lasted longer than the average human lifespan, Microsoft has been found guilty of breaking antitrust laws, and Judge Jackson has ruled that the company should be split into two separate entities – one to sell operating systems and another for software and Internet business.

So what happens now, then?
Well, Microsoft might fight tooth and nail through as many appeals processes as possible, putting off the day when it actually has to react to the ruling. Assuming the ruling is ratified, Microsoft has four months to comply.

How long can it put it off for?
That's where it gets political. The rumour is that Bill Gates – he of the ridiculous fortune – is trying to slow the appeals process down so he can wait for the possible election of George Bush Jnr as American President. Apparently he'd be more lenient. To counter that, the Justice Department is considering enforcing a little-used law called the Expediting Act which will push the case past the Appeals Court, straight into the Supreme Court.

This is all sounding a bit complicated and dull...
Try writing about it.

So get to the point – what does it mean to me?
In an ideal world it will mean more variety and better software that's wonderfully compatible with your Windows operating system. But we don't live in an ideal world.

Bill Gates: feeling green

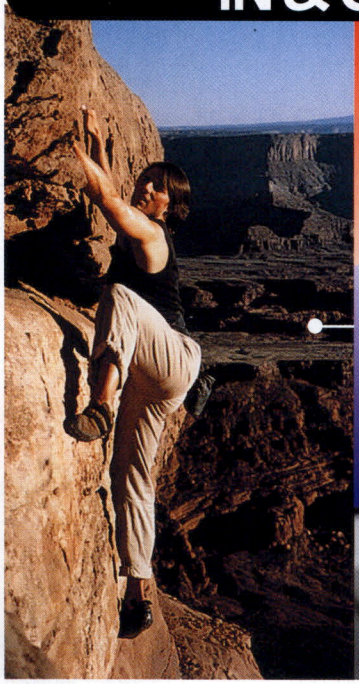
So do I really need to know all this?
Well, at least you know you can now ignore any more news stories about it and just await the consequences instead.

Isn't Gatesy a bit gutted about it all?
He's certainly playing up and complaining about it. On the other hand, if you had $36 billion would you give a toss? No, we thought not.

Where can I find out more the next time I'm suffering from insomnia?
Yahoo! has all the latest goings-on at ***uk.fc.yahoo.com/m/microsoft.html.*** Sleep well.

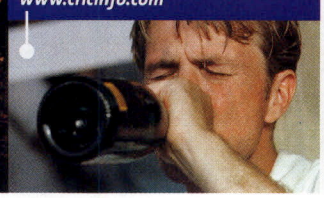
WHAT'S HOT & WHAT'S NOT

IN & OUT



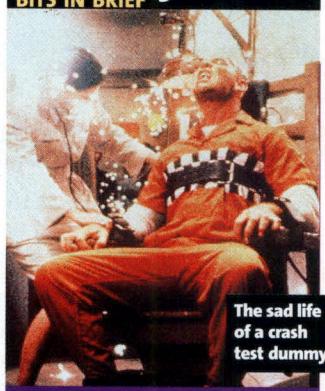
FESTIVALS
www.bigfestivals.com
POMP & CIRCUMSTANCE
www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/proms
CROP CIRCLES
www.circlemakers.org
PERENNIAL FOOTBALL
www.football365.co.uk

REALITY
missionimpossible2.tsx.org
TIM HENMAN
www.henmagic.freeserve.co.uk
AMERICANS
www.independencemuseum.org
ENGLISH CRICKET
www.cricinfo.com



News Bytes

BITS IN BRIEF



The sad life of a crash test dummy

PAY-PER-VIEW EXECUTION

In the latest mad Internet auction, a Texan man attempted to sell seats to view his own execution. Five places were up for grabs with a starting price of $100. There were no takers, however, and the lots were withdrawn after four hours without a bid.

HAVE THEY GOT A WEB SITE FOR YOU

Web users can now play *Have I Got News For You* on the programme's new interactive Web site. The site will host daily caption and missing headline competitions. There will also be regular Odd One Out games, and

The HIGNFY team: droll

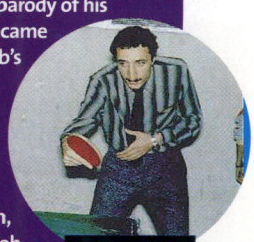
users can post answers which will appear on the site.

www.haveigotnewsforyou.com

MAHIR IS BACK!

Last year Mahir took the Internet by storm as a parody of his home page became one of the Web's most visited sites. But just when you thought the whole thing had died down, community Web site Smartgroups are using him to front a TV ad campaign, and you can also see the not-so-great man on their site. Why couldn't they just let him quietly slide back into obscurity?

www.smartgroups.com



Mahir: starting to annoy us

THE BEST, THE WORST AND THE DAFTEST STUFF ON THE WEB

HEROES & ZEROS

BEST GIMMICK

PM IS A PHONY

The best thing we saw on the Net this month has to be Phony Blair. There's nothing quite like extracting the urine from politicians, and this page does it in style.

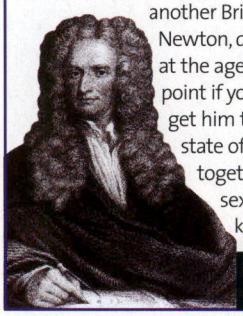
A shockingly realistic vision of Tony Blair, complete with cheesy grin, appears on the page, but then it's up to you to deface him as you will. Cut him a mohican, have him grow Prince Charles-like ears and give him a few piercings to adorn his face. You can even make the PM moo like a heifer. Last but not least, once you've got the nation's Prime Minister looking exactly how you want him, press the magic button (we're not telling you which one it is). Cue some hardcore dance music and you get to see his head spin. Top-class Internet entertainment.

www.phonyblair.com

MOST INFORMATIVE SITE

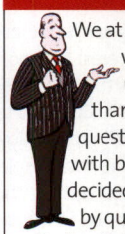
LET'S TALK ABOUT SEX

Sex – everyone has it at some time, unless you're Cliff Richard, of course. Mind you, according to Sexual Records, another Brit, Sir Isaac Newton, died a virgin at the age of 85. He may have had a good innings – but what's the point if you're not going to score? If any young female had managed to get him to the altar she would no doubt have found herself living in a state of agenobiosis – when a married couple who consent to live together without sex. That and God-knows-how-many-more sexual facts and terms are all recorded on the site. Want to know who had the biggest penis? Who has the most orgasms? Of course you do. Best head over to ***www.sexualrecords.com*** now.



Isaac Newton, *avec* cherry

BEST INTERVIEW Surreal conversation



We at *the net* appreciate that search engines are wonderful things. However, they tend to throw up some strange results, and none stranger than Ask Jeeves. Ask Jeeves invites you to pose questions rather than input search terms – often with bizarre results. So much so, that SatireWire decided to hold an 'Interview with a Search Engine...' by querying Ask Jeeves in a Parkinson-esque manner. During the interview Ask Jeeves responded that the Net is like beekeeping, that '2+2' equaled Pauline Hanson-in-a-can and admitted that it suffers from 'Sudden Discharge'. Surreal, yes – even George Best's tanked-up interview on *Wogan* made more sense. Search engines – who needs 'em?

www.fnwire.com/features/satire-jeevesinterview.html
www.askjeeves.com

SPOKEN WORD

LOOK WHO'S TALKING...

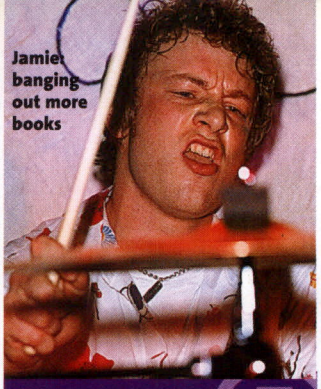
Top quotes from recent celebrity Web chats

'Tina says, when they played the wrong song at the Radio 1 Roadshow live on air! In front of a crowd of 90,000. Rachel's mic pack fell down her trousers and her headset fell off.'
SClub7 forget their albums when asked to describe their most embarrassing moment, on AOL Live.

'There will be loads of good players on show.'
The intelligence of a footballer: Leeds' new signing Olivier Dacourt states the bleeding obvious when asked about Euro 2000 on www.football365.co.uk.

'We'll add the keyboards in, bit of guitar, bit of sax, whoever's around at the time.'
Woody from Madness reveals the highly scientific way of recording an album at eden.vmg.co.uk.

'We make the most of everything that's going on – we don't wear watches anymore! There's no point knowing the time as we've always got something going on.'
Neil from Travis on the consequences of success, at chat.beeb.com.



Jamie banging out more books

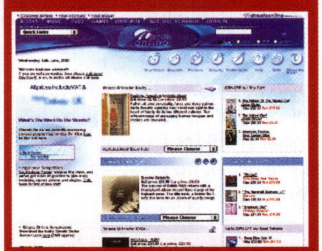
Net Charts 5

THE WEB'S FAVOURITES

TOP-SELLING BOOKS

1 The Return of the Naked Chef *Jamie Oliver*
2 American Psycho *Bret Easton Ellis*
3 The Naked Chef *Jamie Oliver*
4 Disgrace *JM Coetzee*
5 The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon *Stephen King*

www.alphabetstreet.co.uk



BIGGEST UK E-COMMERCE DOMAIN NAMES

1 *www.infront.co.uk*
2 *www.amazon.co.uk*
3 *www.amazon.com*
4 *www.lastminute.com*
5 *www.jungle.com*

MP3 SONGS

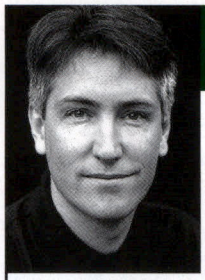
1 Soul Sacrifice *Santana*
2 Trancending Reality *303infinity*
3 Alien Quaked Beats *Raveing Lunatics*
4 Audio Fantasy *303infinity*
5 Somebody To Love *Jefferson Airplane*

Source: *www.mp3.com*

SEXIEST WOMEN

1 Jennifer Lopez
2 Britney Spears
3 Sarah Michelle Gellar
4 Anna Kournikova
5 Kelly Brook

Source: *www.fhm.co.uk*



JON CASIMIR

WORLD SURFING CHAMPION

The Internet just gets better – now you can chat to dead singers

A few months ago, the three surviving Beatles announced that they had inked a $2.5 billion deal to tell their story in book form. The 400-page volume, to be titled *The Beatles Anthology*, is set for release in September.

Frankly, I reckon it'll be dull. What did the Beatles have that N Sync don't? (Answers on the back of a envelope c/o *the net* magazine, address on page 3).

And let's face it, George hasn't made a lot of sense since the drugs kicked in during that whole Maharishi trip; Ringo never seemed to know what was happening to him; and Paul has issues – he was never happy being labelled the cute one while John got to be the smart one.

Which leaves us with John himself. The publishers will no doubt claim that Lennon's current status is something of an obstacle to including his views, but they'd be wrong.

'Mary Poppins was the walrus. Bet you didn't know that!'

Enter the John Lennon Artificial Intelligence Project (***www.triumphpc.com/john-lennon***), a version of the mop-top's personality created with AI software. Anyone dropping by the JLAIP site can chat, Doris Stokes-style, with the deceased singer. David Maggin and the boffins from Triumph PC Online have programmed their Lennon 'bot with real writings and responses to interview questions that the singer made. You'll think it's him!

Going where other media fears to tread, the following is *the net*'s semi-exclusive interview:

tn: What's it like being dead?

JL: Being dead isn't like anything, really.

tn: Who was the walrus?

JL: Mary Poppins was the walrus. Betcha didn't know that!

tn: Why is it that only rich people imagine worlds with no possessions?

JL: Why do I exist?

tn: Enough with the questions. This is silly.

JL: You don't say.

Hmmm.

PICTURES: CORBIS, KOBAL, RETNA

www.thename.co.uk
thename

Premium Service

• 10Mb. web space
• cgi + front page extensions
• all nominet fees
• unlimited e-mail aliases
• Web control panel
£4.99 a month (+VAT)

Special Offer

Domain names
• **co.uk £15** • **.com £38**
(Includes 2 years fees, registration, parking)
• **co.uk £30** • **.com £55**
(Includes e-mail and web-page forwarding)
* all prices +VAT@ 1

Unique Promise

Customers are ALWAYS registered as the owner.
No hidden or transfer fees
No advertising
Next day set-up or you get webspace FREE

Over 20,000 domain names registered - for Wal-Mart inc., Mars, Financial Times and many others.

FREEPHONE 0800 091 4343

Q&A

The Disc-buster

Meet the man who can crack your hard disc open like a walnut – and prepare to be afraid

WHETHER DOWNLOADING pictures of Phillipa Forrester during lunch hour or perpetrating major computer fraud, most people think that use of the 'Delete' button will cover up all evidence of their shenanigans. But they're wrong – and companies like Vogon International are part of a booming industry that can find out what you've been up to on a computer, when you've tried to hide it.

Vogon's propriety software has been used to convict mass murderer Harold Shipman and paedophile Gary Glitter. We caught up with the Bicester-based company's head of investigations, former Customs inspector Cliff May, to find out how the Net's boogie men are caught.

If someone is trying to cover up their tracks, how do you find out what's been on their computer?
You'd be surprised – a lot of people just hit 'Delete' and think it's gone. But even if they empty their Recycle bin there's nearly always still a copy of each file lurking somewhere, because Windows, in particular, hardly ever really throws something away. We're also helped by the huge hard drives everyone's got these days: it mean there's always room for files to be kept by Windows rather than being overwritten.

One of our biggest growth areas is investigating Net abuse at work – normally people looking at porn when they should be working. It can often be a case of looking at what's been cached or what sites are listed in the 'History' folder. If these have been cleared, our secret weapon is our software that hunts down where Windows still keeps a copy.

Surely some people do something a bit smarter than just emptying their Recycle bin?
Yes, people will try to overwrite the portion of their hard drive that might incriminate them. Sometimes this works and we can't find the material, but some software packages that allow you to overwrite data are better than others, so a criminal would have to be confident in the software they opt for.

Another technique criminals employ is steganography – where they use software to hide data

within pictures. This is a lot easier for us to find because our software can go through every file on a hard drive and find anomalies, like a text file residing inside a picture. They also rename files so that a bunch of, say, fraudulent invoices are given a '.exe' extension so they look like program files, but again our software is very good at picking these out.

How do you get hold of a suspect's hard drive?
If it's a business investigating an employee we get permission from the company to go in and make a copy of the hard drive. So as not to arouse suspicion we'll go in at the dead of night dressed up as cleaners or engineers, so the person has no way of knowing they are being investigated. We have large-capacity drives that boot up the suspect's PC, without it showing up in the boot-up log, then copy all their files.

We make two copies: one is for investigation and the other is sealed in an evidence bag so that we cannot be accused of tampering with evidence. If the PC is at someone's home, the company or the police have to get a search warrant for us to enter and copy the data.

Do people ever turn up on your doorstep with PCs?
We're starting to get quite a few potential divorce cases where a wife, and less so a husband, turn up and ask us to investigate a hard drive before their spouse gets home from work or the golf course. Once they've signed over the authority for us to do so, we take a look – and in nearly all cases find out their suspicions are right.

We saved one guy from being ripped off by his wife, who was trying to get money out of him to run off with a lover.

We also had a woman who wanted stains on the back seat of her car examined. We sent her down to a nearby forensics lab while we looked at the hard drive. Sure enough, the stains – and the 'deleted' emails – confirmed her worst fears...

Which of your cases stand out?
Our software and equipment was used to prove how Harold Shipman made up false records after killing patients. He used to go into the system, lie about the date of the entry he'd made then claim they had a condition which caused them to die.

The same thing happened to Gary Glitter. The police used our equipment to find all the porn on his system and, presumably, his paedophile contacts.

But of all the cases we've handled, one of the most memorable was a university student who told his dad his dissertation had disappeared off the floppy he was trying to print it from. His father bought the floppy in to us in a mad rush, but it turned out there had never been anything to recover in the first place. I would have hated to be the son when the dad got home.

Then there was the hard drive that we couldn't get in to. When we took it apart we found it was stuffed with cannabis.

So come on, how can you really cover your tracks?
I'm not going to tell anyone how to get away with fraud! The best thing is not to do anything illegal in the first place, because the chances are you'll get caught. And don't use a computer, because you can never know how good the software is that will investigate you. If you do use a computer, the only real way to kill data is to smash and burn the hard drive it was saved on. Mind you, we've still managed to read data off some pretty mangled disks...

Finally, ever feel tempted to turn 'poacher' yourself?
No, not really! I don't know how the people we investigate sleep at night. I think I'm just too boring – that's why I started out as a civil servant.

Contact Cliff May's company via ***www.vogon-international.com***

Q EVER FEEL TEMPTED TO TURN 'POACHER' YOURSELF?
A NO, NOT REALLY! I DON'T KNOW HOW THOSE PEOPLE SLEEP AT NIGHT

WORDS: SEAN HARGRAVE; PICTURES: GUY JORDAN

'Lunch is served, Mr Hughes'

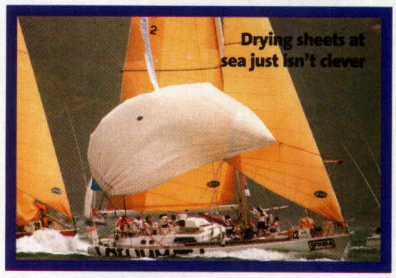
dayslikethese

29 SAT We are sailing, we are sailing...

Cowes Week, Isle of Wight, 29 July-5 August

Aah, you can almost smell the briny! Don your oilskins and deck shoes, because the world's largest sailing regatta is back in town (if you live in Cowes, that is). More than 900 salty sea dogs have registered to take part in this year's colourful Cowes Week, the 178th regatta in the history of the event. Taking place off the coast of the Isle of Wight, the 200 races will start and finish in front of the Royal Yacht Squadron Castle in Cowes. And if you don't enjoy the hot sailing action, go anyway for the social functions that accompany it and play spot the celebrity.

www.cowesweek.co.uk



Drying sheets at sea just isn't clever

Early mazes proved too simple

15 SAT No 1 crop

Crop Circle Weekend, Alton Barnes, Wiltshire, 15-16 July

A couple of years ago a plethora of crop circles popped up in fields across the land. Most people now treat them with indifference, but there are still those who don't – such as the attendees of the International Crop Circle Weekend, the highlights of which include lectures by crop-circle experts, workshops, healing and, apparently, a ceremony in a crop formation. That's country folk for you.

www.cropcircles.co.uk

DEAR DIARY

JULY 5 WEDNESDAY — World Cup 2006 hosts announced
www.fifa.com
NHS launched, 1948
www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk

6 THUR — Motorbike helmets made compulsory, 1971 ***home.wanadoo.nl/menk/safety_eng.html***
Birthday: Jennifer Saunders, 42 ***www.frenchandsaunders.com***

7 FRI — *Mission Impossible 2* released in the UK ***www.missionimpossible.com***
Birthday: Shelley Duvall, 51 ***crash.simplenet.com/shining/***

8 SAT — T in the Park, Scotland ***www.tinthepark.com***
World Pea-Shooting championships, Witcham ***homepages.tesco.net/~neil.somers***

9 SUN — Party in the Park, Hyde Park, London ***www.pitp2000.com***
Royal Military Tattoo 2000 ***www.rmt2000.mod.uk***

15 SAT — British Superbike Championship, Oulton Park ***www.bikenet-racing.com***
Birthday: Linda Ronstadt, 54 ***www.thewesternwall.com***

16 SUN — Austrian Grand Prix ***www.britishf1.co.uk***
Catcher in the Rye first published, 1951 ***www.geocities.com/exploring_citr***

17 MON — Birthday: **Mandy Smith**, 30 ***www.torget.se/users/8/8otal/mandy/frames.htm***

18 TUES — *Mein Kampf* published, 1925 ***www.who2.com/adolfhitler.html***
Birthday: Hunter S Thompson, 61 ***www.goldcoastdigital.com/gonzo***

19 WED — Birthday: **Gabrielle**, 31 ***www.Qonline.co.uk***

25 TUE — Birthday: **Iman**, 45 ***www.i-iman.com***
National Swimming Championships, Sheffield ***www.swimnet.co.uk***

26 WED — Birthday: Kevin Spacey, 41 ***www.spacey.com***
Birthday: Sandra Bullock, 35 ***www.sandra.com***

27 THUR — *Billboard* printed first music charts, 1940 ***www.billboard.com***
Birthday: Jonathan Rhys Meyers, 23 ***ewangirl.simplenet.com/JRMfansite***

28 FRI — Beatrix Potter born, 1866 ***www.peterrabbit.co.uk***
First potatoes arrived in England, 1586 ***www.potato.org.uk***

29 SAT — British Touring Car Championship, Thruxton ***www.autosportmag.com***
Birthday: Stephen Dorff, 27 ***www.geocities.com/~stephendorff***

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY; PICTURES: EMPICS, RETNA, REX

July-August

Inside the giant clam, the tennis fans gathered

8 SAT New balls, please

Wimbledon Finals, Wimbledon, 8-9 July

If there's one thing that's a certainty about Wimbledon, it's that it'll cause people across the nation to head for their nearest tennis court to have a go themselves. We reckon it's best to leave it to the experts, however. As *the net* went to press, Sampras was being tipped for the men's title at 6/4, with Agassi at 7/2 and the housewives' favourite, Henman, at 12/1. You never know...

www.wimbledon.org

10 MON Battle of Britain began, 1940 ***www.geocities.com/Athens/7607***
Birthday: Neil Tennant, 46 ***www.petshopboys.co.uk***

11 TUES Birthday: **Deborah Harry**, 55 ***www.blondie.ausbone.net***
Birthday: Craig Charles, 36 ***www.craigcharles.co.uk***

12 WED Julius Caesar born, 100BC ***moltenlava.com/uo/caesar.htm***
Birthday: Anna Friel, 24 ***www.netshopuk.co.uk/annafriel***

13 THUR Live Aid took place, 1985 ***www.herald.co.uk/local_info/live_aid.html***
Birthday: Harrison Ford, 58 ***www.harrison-ford.net***

14 FRI BBC Proms begin ***www.bbc.co.uk/radio3/proms***
Bastille Day, France ***www.france.com***

20 THUR 129th Open Golf Championship ***www.opengolf.com***
First man on the moon, 1969 ***www.wherewereyou.com***

21 FRI Womad 2000, Reading ***www.bigfestivals.com***
Birthday: Robin Williams, 48 ***www.cs.msstate.edu/~rider/robin.html***

22 SAT Royal International Air Tattoo, Leicester ***www.airtattoo.com/riat2000/index.html***
Birthday: Bonnie Langford, 36 ***www.bonnielangford.co.uk***

23 SUN International Football Festival, Isle of Man ***www.isle-of-man.com***
Birthday: **Slash**, 35 ***www.snakepit.org***

24 MON Birthday: Anna Paquin, 18 ***www.es.co.nz/~dupont***
Birthday: Joe McGann, 42 ***www.pmeb.org/mcganns.html***

30 SUN Football: charity shield, Wembley ***www.soccerupdate.com***
Birthday: Kate Bush, 42 ***gaffa.org***

31 MON Birthday: **Wesley Snipes**, 37 ***members.tripod.com/ladygia***

AUG 1 TUESDAY Great British Beer Festival, London ***www.gbbf.org***
'Glorious' Goodwood ***www.goodwood.co.uk***

2 WED Birthday: Edward Furlong, 23 ***www.edward-furlong.com***
Birthday: Peter O'Toole, 68 ***www.hame.toronto.on.ca/otoole***

3 THUR Cricket: England vs West Indies – Third Test ***www.cricketline.com***
Hot Air Ballooning: European Championships ***www.balloonzone.com***

Normal Internet charges apply.
SHARE YOUR PASSION
build your own free website with
moonfruit.com
www.tashtastic.moonfruit.com

Dear thenet,

While reading 'Inbox' in the latest edition, smiling to myself at other people's tales and weird observations, I noticed a caption at the bottom claiming 'Everyone's A Winner'. Ah, I thought, this must be the bit where the mag offers something to the people who bothered to write or mail in.

But no; it offers a free Healthcheck at PC World of all places. So in return for writing to you, we get to go the same way as Gary Glitter. Of course we've all got something dodgy on our hard disks somewhere, even if we don't know it. Do we really 'win'? I don't think so.

So how about a £40 Amazon voucher – now *that's* worth writing in for. So please, if you do publish this letter, don't give me a PC Healthcheck. Maybe I shouldn't have written this in the first place.

David T
via email
Is that the sound of sirens heading for the 'T' residence? It surely is...

Dear thenet,

Tim Richardson's views (July 2000) on Unsolicited Commercial Email (or 'spam' to you and I) were both interesting and thought-provoking. Mail-bombing may relieve the frustration, but this (and also flaming the spammer) will only validate one's email address to him. Now he's certain you exist, whereas before he was merely guessing.

A much better way to strike back at spammers is to use the free services of Spamcop (***www.spamcop.net***); the simple process of cutting and pasting the spam (complete with all headers) is reduced to three or four keystrokes. The more people who send abuse reports to a spammer's ISP about a specific instance of spam, the more likely the spammer is to be punished, in the form of termination of service by his or her ISP.

James Scullion
via email

READER'S LETTER OF THE MONTH

Dear thenet,

At the beginning of this year I read your magazine and was inspired by an article about building your own home page. In February I registered a domain name and set up my own Web site ***www.one-love.co.uk***.

It was to inform clubbers of my ideas of which clubs are cool and which DJs play where. I struggled along but was helped by the constant ideas and confidence-boosting comments I read in your mag.

Word of mouth made the site popular among my friends, and their friends too. The 100,000th visitor was recorded last month, and all this without having entered any of the search engines.

As I started DJing a few years ago, I was able to tell my visitors where I played. Soon I was contacted by a DJ who saw the site and I performed at Progress in Derby and took the roof off in front of 1,200 screaming people. Now I am officially known as the 'One-Love Party Crew'.

A date in Holland is in the pipeline, as well as a club in Miami. This is the start of something beautiful, and I am so proud that it started with that simple home page, which I read was so easy to create in your magazine...

Look out, Slim – here comes Christiaan

DJ Christiaan
Chris@one-love.co.uk
Readers! Have you achieved fame, wealth or sexual success simply by reading the net*? If so, why not write in and share your experiences (and cash)?*

MAIL MONKEY Now you're stalking

From: **mailmonkey@chimp.co.uk**
Sent: Wednesday June 14, 2000
To: threequarters@allsaints.com
Subject: Your future career

Dear Mel, Natalie and Nicole,

Well, your movie career wasn't exactly a roaring success, was it? I was visiting some special contacts in South America and by the time I got back your film had been consigned to the cinematic garbage can. Don't worry too much, though – my own celluloid debut, *Monkey Business in Africa*, wasn't a stunning effort either. I also heard there was a fair bit of monkey business going on with you lot getting your kit off on-screen. Yet when I proposed a similar idea to your agent a while back, what did I get? A hundred hours' community service. Fortunately, after that incident with the stairlift, the motorised wheelchair and the wealthy widow with the heart condition, the judge decided custody might be more appropriate.

It must be bloody annoying that nobody went to see you topless, yet people like Jo Guest and Sam Fox made a career out of it. And more people watched the Spice Girls' movie than yours.

Anyway, you should get back to recording, as I hear Shaznay's not very happy about you playing movie stars when all she wants to do is concentrate on making music. We had the same problem in our band, but once Micky Dolenz and Davy Jones had been given a good spanking by their mums they soon fell into line.

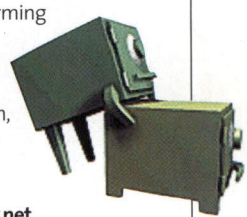
By the way, do Natalie and Nicole ever get mistaken for each other? It used to happen with me and my brother all the time: when he got that gig in the Tarzan flicks I used to get the movie star treatment everywhere I went. Still, as I was saying to Mrs M just the other day, all three of you are welcome round Monkey Towers. We've just had to lay off those Thai boys we were employing as cleaners following police advice (a shame, as they buffed up my toolset a treat) – and I've got a sneaking feeling you might just be glad of the work quite soon...

Toodlepip,

Mail monkey

Dear thenet,

In your 'Letter Of The Month' in the June 2000 issue, you complained about having missed out on 'furniture performing sexual activity.' I wouldn't want you not to get to join in the fun, so here they are again (right).



Remy C
remyc@prodigy.net

Dear thenet,

With reference to your piece on 'smileys' in the online chat section: I was interested to find that, in order to read them, you say that they should be turned 90 degrees to the left. But, surely, if the parenthesis represents the mouth, they should be turned 90 degrees to the right!

Dennis Armstrong
sanden@armstrong33.freeserve.co.uk
Thanks for nothing, Dennis.

EVERYONE'S A WINNER

PC WORLD THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

Each letter published wins a PC World Healthcheck – the MOT service for your PC. It includes diagnostic and anti-virus checks, plus a complete valet inside and out, worth £39.99.

PICTURE: ANGELA LUBRANO, REX

eBay.co.uk is where all kinds of like-minded people meet to swap stories and buy and sell just about everything under the sun.

From books, movies and music, through photography and sports memorabilia, to electronics and computers, if it's worth talking about, if it's worth money, it's worth looking for at eBay.co.uk

eBay™

Thousands of auctions happening right now – and it's free to register!

www.ebay.co.uk

Featuring an up-to-the-minute, geek-free Internet news service from your favourite Net magazine. We'll keep you informed of all the latest ISP and Web news as it breaks!

THE NET NOW

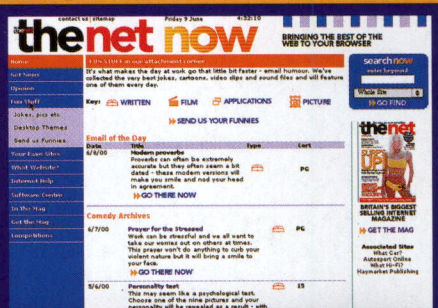
NET NEWS, FUN STUFF AND OPINION

www.thenetnow.co.uk

WHAT'S INSIDE THE NET NOW?

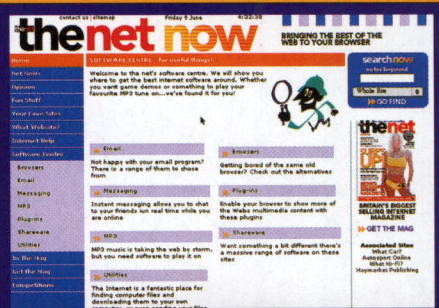
HOME PAGE

Our home page points you to the hottest Net news story of the day. We'll also guide you to the best features on the site and the complete content is easily accessed through the left-hand menu.



FUN STUFF

Need something to pass the time? Bored at work and looking for some light relief? Check out our email attachment of the day, offering you the loudest laugh in cyberspace.

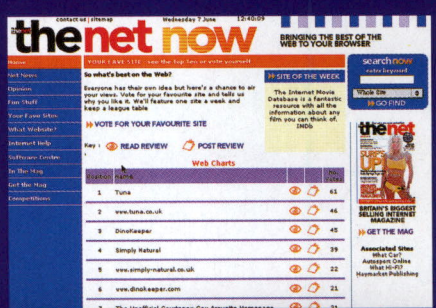


SOFTWARE CENTRE

We'll show you where to find the best software available. Whether it's for work or play, we've searched out all of the essential software to make your life online more enjoyable.

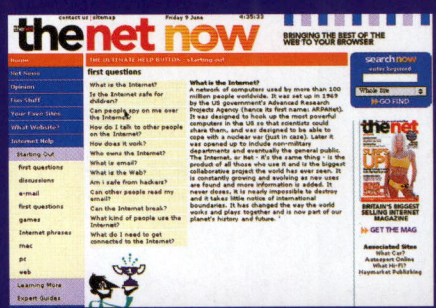
WHAT WEBSITE?

There's a huge number of Web addresses in *the net* each month, but don't panic: we've archived every site we've ever featured!



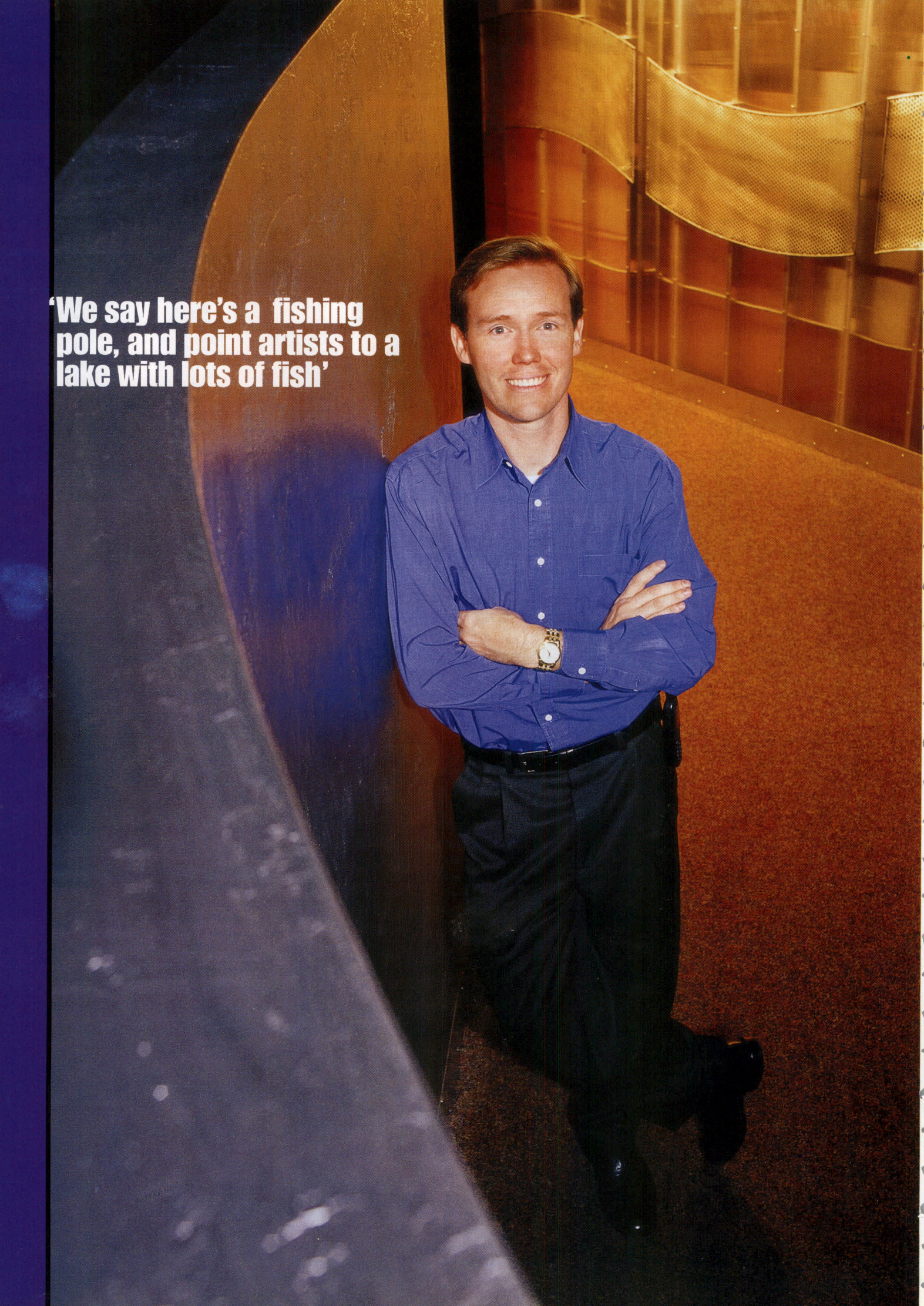
BEST OF THE WEB

What's your favourite Web site? We'll feature one every week from your recommendations, and keep a league table of the sites you're voting for.



HELP SECTION

Don't know your FTP from your HTML? We've got loads of Net advice on our site, and – praise be! – it's all written in plain English.


'We say here's a fishing pole, and point artists to a lake with lots of fish'

THANK YOU FOR THE MUSIC

No13 MP3.COM www.mp3.com

If the key to a successful Web site is getting the domain name right, then MP3.com CEO Michael Robertson has every reason to be rubbing his hands with smug satisfaction. Yet 'smug' would be a harsh word to throw at someone who freely admits he wasn't even sure what he was doing when he created the phenomenon that now claims to have an incredible 10 million registered users, 50,000 artists and over a quarter of a million tracks. Indeed, the domain name that went a long way to cementing the site's massive success was bought from someone with the initials 'MP' – who must be kicking himself pretty hard right now.

Robertson had already been involved with search engines Filez and Websitez when he came across digital music and set up an MP3 site. It was intended to bring all the interesting news stories about MP3 together, but he soon realised there wasn't much news around so they would have to write their own. Then came the idea which epitomises the site – to create a place where unsigned bands could have their own Web page and upload music, therefore publishing it to the world. The sheer volume of copycat Web sites is compelling evidence of the merits of the scheme.

Not that Robertson has been content to rest on his laurels: MP3.com is one of those continually developing Web sites. As an example, the 'DAM' service offered to artists requires them to provide one full-length, CD-quality song, leaving MP3.com to create the CD, take orders for and distribute it before giving the artist half the money. And if the artist decides at any time they want to end their agreement with the site they are free to leave – a refreshing change from the watertight contracts imposed on artists by record companies.

The domain name was bought from someone with the initials 'MP'

And it's not just services for artists – there's plenty for the listening audience. The introduction of My.MP3.com allows you to create your own store of music online. This can be a collection of MP3s from the site, or you can use MP3.com's Beam-it software to add the contents of your CD collection to your online stash. Not that this went down particularly well with a record industry continually attempting to thwart the MP3 format by throwing lawsuits around like so much confetti. The five major record labels all filed lawsuits over My.MP3.com, saying it amounted to blatant copyright infringement.

This wasn't by any means the first time MP3.com had clashed with the music giants. 'Ever wondered why CDs cost more than tapes even though they cost less to produce?' Robertson muses. 'It's because that's what the music industry has decided. This sort of control they cannot exert over the Net, which is why they are threatened.' Despite the fact that Robertson resolved to fight the lawsuits, MP3.com has just settled with the Warner Music Group and BMG Entertainment. The settlements are believed to have cost as much as $50 million. More importantly, the company had to agree to pay the companies an undisclosed fee every time a record label's CD is registered by a My.MP3.com user and every time a track is accessed. It will no doubt be forced to agree a similar deal with Sony, Universal Music Group and EMI.

But while industry analysts have questioned whether MP3.com can generate revenue if it is continually paying out to the record labels, there is little doubt that it will remain the champion of unsigned musicians. This despite the fact that Robertson freely admits artists really have to make their own effort to market themselves. 'We simply say here's a fishing pole, and we point them to a lake with lots of fish in it,' he claims. 'Whether they catch anything is up to them.'

The question is, can MP3.com ever hope to compete with the big fish of the record industry without getting caught itself? Time, and possibly a whole catch of lawsuits, will tell...

WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW

MP3.COM

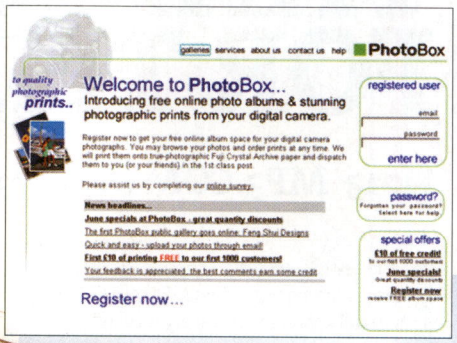
WHAT IS IT? A music service provider that allows users to find, buy, listen to, store and organise music and access it from the site. Also a place for artists to promote their music.
LAUNCHED November 1997.
TRAFFIC 510,000 daily visitors.
BASE San Diego.
KEY FEATURES My.MP3.com allows visitors to create their own music collection online. You can add any free MP3 songs from the site or use MP3.com's Beam-It software to make MP3 files from your CDs. You can also create your own radio station. Artists can have their own homepage and sell CDs on the site.

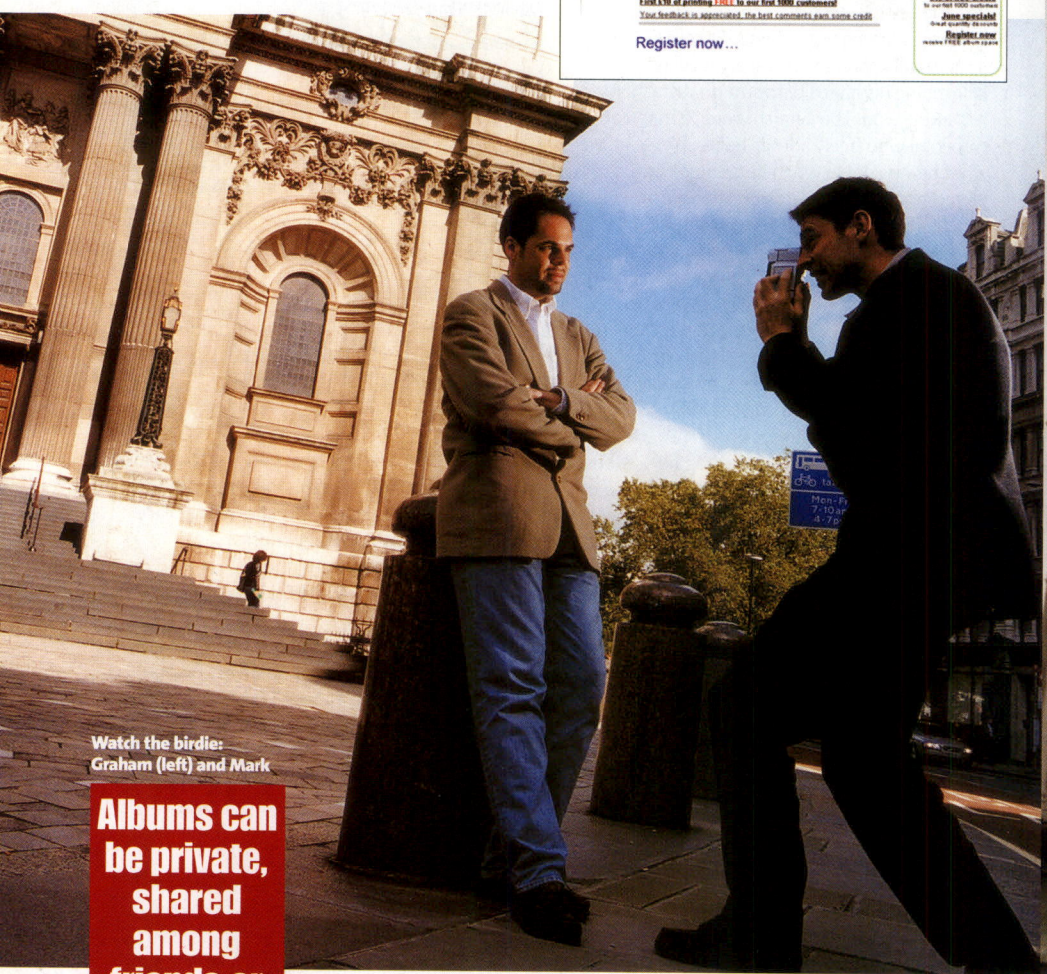
PHOTO SYNTHESIS Store and print your pics

PHOTOBOX

www.photobox.co.uk

Ever bought a gadget, realised its limitations – and binned it? Graham Hobson has. Like many, he got hold of a digital camera and took pictures, uploaded them and spent an age printing them on his inkjet. 'My wife wanted another 20 printed out. I said 'Life's too short...' But it occurred to me there was a niche.' Graham had found the fabled 'gap in the market'.





Watch the birdie: Graham (left) and Mark

Albums can be private, shared among friends or open to the public

That was in October, and by the end of January Graham and his long-time associate Mark Chapman launched PhotoBox. The concept is simple, as are all the best ideas: it's an online photo album, a storage facility for up to 20Mb of digital photographs, from which you can order prints at real, fresh-from-Boots quality. The chances are, they'll be on your doormat the next day.

'You keep the benefits of digital photography – taking hundreds of pictures and choosing the best – but not everyone wants to sit chugging out inkjet prints,' Graham points out. 'We provide the missing piece of the puzzle: real photos you can hold in your hand and show your grandma.'

Albums, created by the user, can be private, shared among nominated friends (who are given a password), or open to the public. As a result, Auntie Anne can choose which wedding snaps she wants printed out, and they'll be delivered to her door. 'If you put them up on the Web,' explains Graham, 'not only do you get high-quality prints, but you can also open them to a global audience.'

Having spent a decade in the City, the duo knew who to go to for investment. 'There's relatively freely available capital for good ideas, and there's a definite leg-up to be had from having a City background,' admits Mark. 'We have access to those who are keen to invest in us.'

Graham and Mark believe they're the first into a major new arena. 'The photography market's about to make a big switch from analogue to digital,' forecasts Graham. 'We've seen it with music going to CDs, with mobile phones going digital and with videos going to DVD. Photography is just about to make that move.'

And there's more good news in store for all us amateur snappers. 'Mobile phones are now given away in return for service contracts,' says Mark, 'and we think cameras will go the same way. People will subscribe to a Web storage and printing service and expect a camera free!'

WORDS: GARY PARKINSON; PICTURES: STEVE ORINO

'Someone ordered a Barry White CD and a packet of condoms'

THE FAST SHOW Get stuff within an hour

BAGS OF TIME

www.bagsoftime.com

This man could save your bacon. Most Internet stores have a touch of *Open All Hours* about them, but Bob Hitching is an Arkwright on amphetamines. His 'retailer of rapid convenience', BagsOfTime, furnishes London punters with their shopping needs in an hour – flat. Give him 60 minutes, he'll give you the world.

'The Internet can save people time and effort,' explains Bob. And he knows from experience...

'One night before Christmas last year,' begins Bob in best festive storytelling voice, 'I planned a night on the Dreamcast playing Soul Calibur with some friends. After spending three hours driving round trying to buy it, I realised there had to be a better way of getting things in a rush – so I started BagsOfTime.'

It didn't take long to get a good team together. Retail expert Julian King (Waterstone's, Dillons) and corporate lawyer Adrian Woodcock both know how to keep a start-up afloat, and bossman Bob is no stranger to e-tailing, having cut his teeth at Rupert Murdoch's FiredUp.com. ('Murdoch has recently woken up to the power of the Internet – I joined last summer and there were less than 10 of us. Now there's about 120.')

The service started with the Net staples of CDs, books, DVDs and videos, but initial caution is being replaced by speculation and expansion. 'We started with the top sellers,' explains Bob, 'but we now understand enough about the customers to extend. We're lucky in that it's scalable – once the recipe's right we can plonk it into Manchester or Birmingham or wherever.'

That said, Bob's aware of the company's limitations. 'We're not ever going to offer 400 million books like Amazon. We're for people who need something quickly. People say Amazon's cheaper, but I tell them there's an even cheaper way: go down to your local library and fill out a form, you'll get it for free. You pay us a pound or so more, you get it in an hour. Time is money.'

Time is of the essence at BagsOfTime, whose reputation stands or falls on the 60-minute promise. So when a press release about a 21-minute CD delivery was questioned, the team rose to the bait. 'The BBC phoned us up saying they didn't believe it,' remembers Bob. 'So we went to their studios and they ordered a CD on live radio; it was in the studio within 21 minutes.'

It's not their only eye-opening delivery. 'We sold a shirt to a man who was working in an office above Liberty's, one of the finest retailers in the world. And we had someone order a Barry White CD and a packet of condoms on a Friday afternoon.'

nextmonth

'Having a nice time, dear?'

Let *the net*'s guide to late online holiday bargains sort the sand from the sewage

PLUS

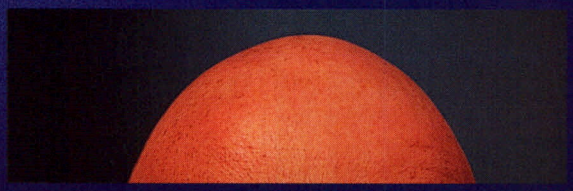
WATCH THE BIRDIE!
How the Net can improve your snaps

LOOK WHAT I MADE
Your first Web site

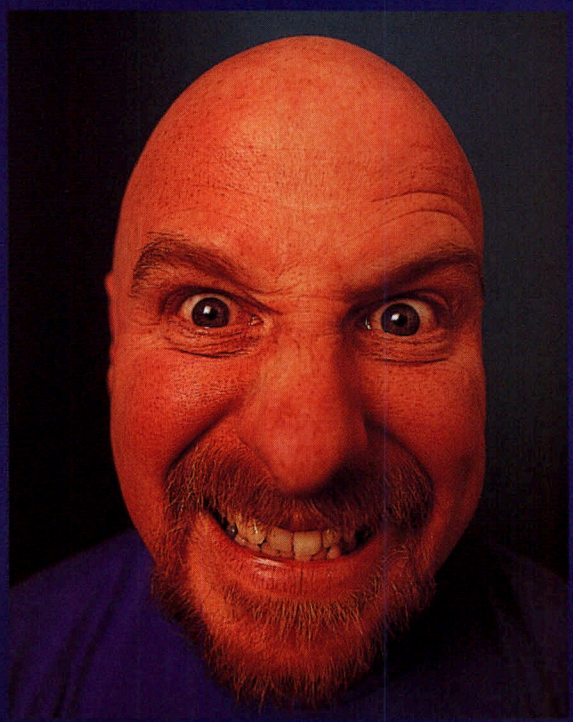
NEWSMAKERS

thenet September issue on sale Wednesday August 9

E.T. The Extra-Terrestrial TM & © Universal Studios



In the time it takes you to download this



BT Highway could have downloaded all this.

BT Highway converts your existing phone line into two digital lines. It lets you download stuff from the net twice as fast as the average modem.

And with BT Together, conversion costs just £49.50.

BT are building for the net generation – so, what are you waiting for?

BT *Stay in touch*

Call 0800 800 807 or order online at bt.com/homehighway

BT TOGETHER HOME HIGHWAY PACKAGE £39.99 A MONTH INCLUDING RENTAL. ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT REQUIRED. RESIDENTIAL LINES ONLY SUBJECT TO SURVEY. MINIMUM CONTRACT TERMS APPLY.

THEY'RE PANTS!

Men! Isn't it about time you treated your nether regions to a new outfit?

OK, so unless you're a exhibitionist, precious few people see them (although you might wish a few more would once in a while). As any woman will tell you, however, wearing a nice pair of pants does wonders for your self-confidence. But are your underwear shopping trips limited to a walk-in-quick-grab-something-off-the-shelf-and-leave experience? Then fear not – because now you can shop for your underwear without leaving the comfort of your most comfortable chair. Yes, you can order your pants online!

But we're not talking about your ordinary run-of-the-mill, white cotton Y-fronts. Nope, there is a veritable selection of trollies available over the Interweb. And, as a demonstration, we at *the net* have oh-so-kindly gathered together a selection for you.

Many high-street retailers now run online stores, so if the long-lasting and hard-wearing Marks and Sparks undie (including the classic vest) is your thing, you can now buy over the Net. If, however, you prefer leopard-skin thongs or other such garishly coloured under-apparel, shops such as Kiniki (*www.kiniki.com*) or Whyfronts (*www.whyfronts.com*) will cater for your needs admirably.

If you'd prefer a leopard-skin thong, your needs are admirably catered for

So you really haven't got any excuses – just look below and use our guide to the best online underwear shops, then swap those saggy old grey things for something altogether more stylish.

HOW THE SITES COMPARE

KINIKI *www.kiniki.com*
Summer boxers, thongs and pyjamas from this UK company, divided into handy categories. ★★★★★

SHORTSITE *www.shortsite.com*
Plenty of major-name underwear on this neat and minimalist site. ★★★★

M&S *www.marks-and-spencers.co.uk*
Classic underwear at reasonable prices, from the online version of the high-street store. Limited selection, though. ★★★

DEBENHAMS *www.debenhams.co.uk*
A good range of undies, both named and own-brand, at the Debenhams site. ★★★★

BRASSMONKEYS *www.brassmonkeys.co.uk*
Great site, great underwear, great campaign – your Brass Monkeys order comes complete with information on testicular cancer. ★★★★★

WHYFRONTS *www.whyfronts.com*
Funky designer label underwear on a funky site, which also sells the butch Brass Monkey brand. ★★★★

HOUSTON *www.houston-menswear.co.uk*
Generously-proportioned clothing for the taller man, including a selection of undergarments. ★★★★

BRIEFLOOK *www.brieflook.co.uk*
Allow the lovely lady to guide you round this site which sells both men's and women's underwear. ★★★★

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY; PICTURES: NICK WRIGHT, PA

RINGO BRIEFS £7.92
www.kiniki.com
BLACK TRUNKS £7.00
www.marks-and-spencers.co.uk
JIVE BRIEFS £4.40
www.kiniki.com
BRASS MONKEYS
PANTARA BRIEFS
£7.12
www.kiniki.com
BLACK BRIEFS £4.99
www.brassmonkeys.co.uk
PINSTRIPE SHORTS £6.99
www.brassmonkeys.co.uk
PALE BLUE BOXERS £10.00
www.marks-and-spencers.co.uk
CAMOUFLAGE THONG
£5.99
www.brassmonkeys.co.uk

[www.topukwebsites.com]

computers & gadgets

capital.uk.com

Capital TECHNOLOGY the ultimate home and office PC centre, brings you an **amazing exclusive offer**. The award winning Vcam webcamera with videomail software for just £49.99 a **massive 16.7% discount** from the usual £60 selling price. visit www.capital.uk.com/top for this and other amazing offers.

firebox.com

The only place for the latest gadgets, boys' toys, books, music, videos, games and cool stuff you just can't live without. Sign up for the newsletter and get **FREE limited edition, boys' toys Top Trumps.**

topwebsite

carphonewarehouse.com

An easy to use and cleverly designed transactional website. Use it for information or to buy your chosen mobile phone, network and tariff. Stay in touch with all the latest technology and an **EXCLUSIVE WAP half price offer** at www.carphonewarehouse.com/top1.

21store.com

21store.com has forged its position as a leading e-tailer of digital products. We provide brands like JVC, Casio, Garmin, Fuji and many more, at competitive prices and with unsurpassed customer support. We know digital.

house & home

qvcuk.com

The online department store. Over 8,000 products in fashion, jewellery, home and garden, electrical, health and beauty and collectables and gifts, plus **special offers** and information about its parent, QVC The Shopping Channel.

topwebsite

maelstrom.co.uk

Offering contemporary lifestyle products for the home, and a wide range of innovative gifts and personal accessories.
Visit our exclusive page for topuk readers - www.maelstrom.co.uk/topuk - with great competitions and discounts including the new micro scooter/drinking mans shot glass chess set and many more top products.

homefreehome.co.uk

HomeFREEHome.co.uk is the revolutionary new site allowing you to buy and sell your house FREE from estate agency charges. We charge absolutely NO FEES and NO COMMISSIONS to buyers and sellers alike. Be part of the vision... be part of the future!

empiredirect.co.uk

For **EXCLUSIVE** top offers saving you £££££££s on top branded electrical goods click on www.empiredirect.co.uk/offers.asp Choose from the very latest in Home Entertainment Products, Domestic appliances, Hi-Fi Separates and In Car entertainment.

entertainment & games

urwired.com

With prices on video games up to **25% cheaper** than the high street retailers, the choice is clear ~ Get yourself wired at www.URWired.com

alphabetstreet.com

Enjoy the complete online book buying experience at Alphabetstreet, with **discounts of up to 50%** on all books; a unique loyalty scheme, and all the latest from the book world.

dvdplus.co.uk

DVDplus, your first choice for DVD. The best selection, pricing and customer service and a unique loyalty scheme which means **FREE DVD's**. Enter our draw to **win a Philips DVD player** - www.dvdplus.co.uk/win

topwebsite

davista.co.uk

Quadruple loyalty points! When you register and buy CDs, Books or Computer Hardware at Davista. Become a Davista member and you will earn loyalty points which can be traded for Davista products or used as discount.

health & fashion

fragrancedirect.co.uk

Up to 50% off designer fragrances. Make substantial savings on genuine fragrances with many 100ml bottles selling at the price of a 50ml. To celebrate the launch of our newly designed website we are offering a **further 5% discount** when ordering through Topukwebsites until the end of June 2000.

dressmart.com

Dressmart.com is the new Europe-wide clothing and accessories retailing site for men. At the click of a mouse, the service will deliver men's clothing from the likes of Thomas Pink, Gieves and Hawkes, Aquascutum and Burberry. **Just insert the code top, when spending £80 and get £20 off.**

topwebsite

thinknatural.com

Healthy bodies, relaxed bodies, invigorated bodies: there's something for everybody at ThinkNatural.com. Register now to qualify for a our **two-for-the-price-of-one** discount on popular products including evening primrose oil and garlic.

designerdiscount.co.uk

For the latest branded designer wear with **up to 75% off** the RRP and much more! Spend over £100 and get a **FREE** Pair Of Calvin Klein Boxer Shorts (RRP=£19.99): just key in 'TopUkWebsites Exclusive Offer: Free CK' in our 'Special Instructions' box.

to stay in a UK or European hotel for £1 a night...*

*subject to terms and conditions

for the uk's premier shopping sites

offering speed, ease of use, great customer service & exclusive offers

food & drink

topwebsite

vegnet.co.uk

vegnet

'Ultra fresh Veg via the Internet'

Veg-net supplies ULTRA FRESH; vegetables, salads, fruit, exotics, herbs, organics and prepared products, via the internet, straight from the farm to your door within 24 hours. Go to www.vegnet.co.uk/top and get a **FREE Seasonal Pack worth £15** when you buy a Combo Pack.

itswine.com

ItsWine.com

With a great choice of fabulous wines from just £2.99, including great modern classics for under £4.99, ItsWine.com offers you the Net's finest selection of quality wines. Catch the wave at www.itswine.com/top for an **exclusive 10% off** many of ItsWine.com's prices

iceland.co.uk

Iceland.co.uk

Iceland offer frozen, fresh and grocery products and is the only UK food retailer to offer nation-wide Internet Shopping. Iceland promises to fight for 'food you can trust'.

chocexpress.com

CHOCEXPRESS
Delivered Chocolate Gifts

For the very finest quality chocolates, delivered with your personal message. To order or request a free catalogue, call 01763- 25 77 44 or visit our website at www.chocexpress.com and quote Top1 for the **latest Hot Chocolate offers.**

motoring

autobytel.co.uk

autobytel.co.uk

Autobytel, the worlds largest internet based new and used car buying service. Empowering consumers with uniquely aggregated information to help them make informed purchasing decisions. Become a registered user of autobytel.co.uk and you will be entered into our **exclusive** prize draw.

rac.co.uk

RAC

Visit www.rac.co.uk/topuk today for an exclusive offer on RAC membership. **Save up to £10** and claim a **free** car check and legal expenses Insurance when you join online. Offer ends June 30th, but check out our site regularly for more great membership deals into the summer.'

topwebsite

eaglestar.co.uk

EAGLE STAR

Eagle Star, a pioneering UK insurance provider on the Internet, offers **online quotes** and immediate purchase of car, home and travel insurance.

hertz.co.uk

Hertz

Rent any Hertz car from now until the end of the year and get **two adult tickets for the price of one** to Warwick Castle, where you can experience over 1000 years of exciting English history. Get out of town with Hertz.

leisure & travel

ebookers.com

ebookers.com

Looking for a flight? Need a short break? Whatever your travel needs, find the solution online at www.ebookers.com. We have extensive access to millions of discounted airfares, fantastic holiday bargains, **free on-line travel services** and so much more. ebookers.com - don't be here, be there.

EURO 2000

kitbag.com

Kitbag.com
THE SPORTS SHOP FOR THE SPORTS FAN

Kitbag.com, the best place to go for everything you need to support your team in Euro2000. replica and retro shirts, leisurewear, videos and other merchandise. Plus **FREE** next day UK delivery for all orders over £15!

onlinefx.co.uk

online $ DM £ fr ¥ C fx foreign exchange

Off on holiday? Buy your foreign currencies and traveller's cheques from Online FX. Great rates, **zero commission**, next working day delivery, buy back service and more...

qxl.com

QXL.com
online auctions

Join QXL.com and get a **FREE movie rental at Blockbuster video**. Join by entering 'top/rental' in the promotion field. New members get access to our 'Welcome to QXL auctions.' You'll get **items for £1** including: TombRaider III and Rollercoaster Tycoon.

specialities

topwebsite

teleflorist.co.uk

TELEFLORIST

Teleflorist is the UK's largest network of professional florists. We offer a wide range of bouquets for every occasion - all individually-designed and hand-delivered. Order securely on-line for same-day or next-day delivery.

tyrwhitt.com/top

CHARLES TYRWHITT
Maker of fine shirts
JERMYN STREET LONDON

Charles Tyrwhitt Shirts, of Jermyn Street, sell both classic and casual shirts and accessories for men and women. Buy with confidence the site is secure and all products are covered by the Charles Tyrwhitt guarantee. Buy using this URL and get a **10% discount** for a limited period only.

outofafrika.co.uk

OUT OF AFRIKA
The Best Of Contemporary African Design

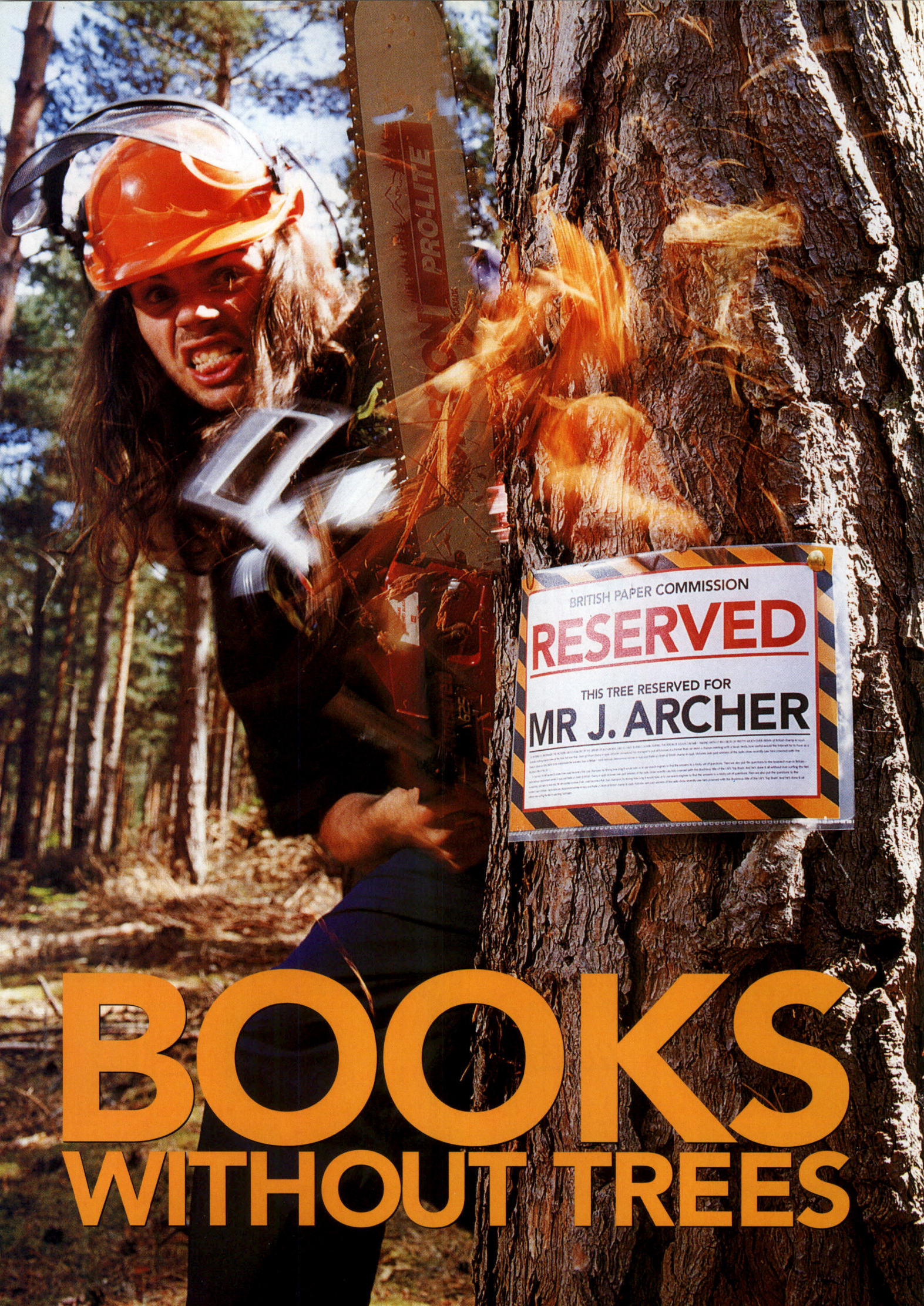
Out Of Afrika exclusively brings you a large range of interesting, unusual gifts and stylish home accessories. **5% of all sales are donated** directly to St. Philomena's children's home in South Africa. Buy from our secure online site or Freephone 0800 018 7845 for your free catalogue.

smile.co.uk

.co.uk
smile the internet bank
from THE CO-OPERATIVE BANK

Visit smile, a bank built for the Internet. We offer a full range of accounts - current accounts, student current accounts, no-notice savings accounts, ISAs, loans and credit cards. All offering rates to make you smile!

..visit our new site now at [www.topukwebsites.com]



BOOKS WITHOUT TREES

THERE'S GOING TO BE A WHOLE LOAD OF UNEMPLOYED LOGGERS ONCE THE E-PUBLISHING REVOLUTION GETS UNDER WAY

IN SPRING, THE BOFFINS AT MICROSOFT looked into their crystal balls and announced that the sale of electronic books would overtake those of ye olde paper and ink volumes by 2009, and by 2018 magazines and newspapers would abandon paper altogether. But haven't we heard that somewhere before? Over 70 years ago, Sir Stephen Gaselee told the London Bibliographical Society: 'It is by no means certain that the printed book will remain as the chief medium of the transmission of knowledge. The development of gramophones, broadcasting and television may eventually abolish the book except as a curiosity and a subject of antiquarian research.' He was a little premature, but Sir Stephen is finally going to be proved right...

So what's changed? Bill Gates has a reason for his confidence, because this summer he launched the Microsoft Reader with ClearType technology. This clever piece of software runs on the latest Pocket PCs and allows you to read novels on-screen. But Microsoft aren't the pioneers of the handheld reader; the Rocket e-book has been on sale in the US since early last year. Traditional publishers know that something

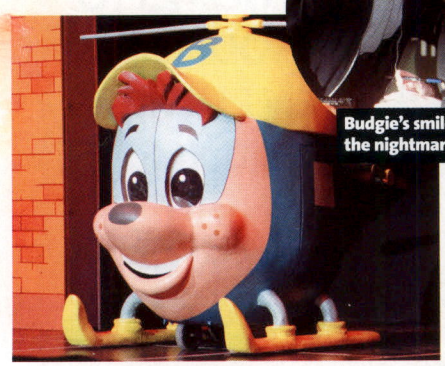
very big is starting to happen – and they're working overtime to protect their future. Some, such as Simon and Schuster, are already selling their books as Rocket Editions, while later this year Penguin launch their first range of e-books.

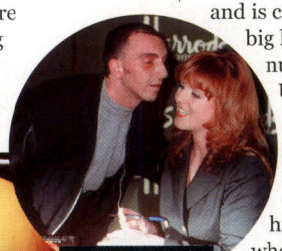
Andrew Rosenheim, managing director of Penguin Press, says: 'There's a bewildering array of technological developments, but the most radical change is going to be the nature of the book itself, as it becomes electronic.'

Of course, the industry notoriously over-estimated the possibilities of CD-ROM a few years ago, while most computer owners didn't get past figuring out how to use Encarta. But Rosenheim is clearly excited by two recent developments: portability and screen resolution. 'I think the adage that you can't take a PC to bed is just not true any more. There is an explosion going on at the handheld end of the spectrum. With ClearType, for the first time you can say, "Golly! That's getting close to book resolution."'

So if you publish electronically, people are going to read you. Punters are downloading ever increasing amounts of electronic text, and the average teenager is probably more familiar with a computer than a book. Within a day of publication, 400,000 people had downloaded Stephen King's 16,000 word e-novella *Riding the Bullet* (***www.simonsays.com***), and now Microsoft have paid Michael Crichton a not-insignificant sum of money so they can give away his blockbuster *Timeline* to promote their Reader. Words are the next MP3. With the advent of e-publishing, authors can produce their own books, or look for others who are prepared to publish them online.

'To say you can't take a PC to bed is just not true'





Budgie's smile hid the nightmares

FINDING A PUBLISHER

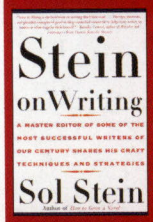
Whether it's a free site like Storyteller (***www.storyteller.org.uk***) or one of the emerging online publishers who charge for books and pay their writers royalties, someone out there wants to publisher your book. Serial Books (***www.serialbooks.com***) is one of the first commercial online publishing sites in the UK and is currently recruiting writers for their big launch later this year. Also a number of the established sites in the US which have been pioneering print-on-demand (see below) are now beginning to offer the option of having your work sold as an e-book.

An alternative is to join one of the hundreds of Internet writers groups, where not only will you be able to showcase your work (like at One Of Us at ***www.users.globalnet.co.uk/~nattrest/oneofus*** or ***www.absolutewrite.com***) but you'll benefit from sharing advice with other wordsmiths.

PRINTING ON DEMAND

One of the main benefits of e-publishing is that books need never go out of print. Set-ups such as iUniverse (***www.iuniverse.com***) in

E-AUTHOR
THE OLD MASTER



Even well-established authors can find themselves benefiting from this shake-up in the publishing world. In 1998, Sol Stein's international bestseller *The Magician* finally went out of print after 27 years on bookstore shelves. Now, thanks to one of iUniverse's print-on-demand publishing schemes, it's available once again.

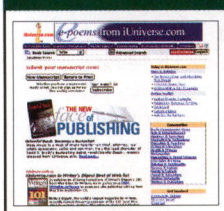
Sol, now in his seventies, has had a remarkable career: with nine novels to his name and prize-winning plays produced on Broadway, he has also worked as an editor for writers ranging from Dylan Thomas to Jack Higgins.

Sol is also founder of the WritePro corporation, which sells award-winning software for writers.

And, while welcoming new technology, he sounds a note of caution for first-time novelists not to rush into e-publishing: 'There is a great danger in turning off readers if novels that are not yet ready are posted and disappoint.'

www.writepro.com

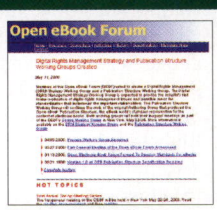
SITES FOR SCRIBBLERS
Use that computer for more than just word-processing



IUNIVERSE

www.iuniverse.com

Whether you're a new author or you want to get an old book back into print, check out the publishing packages on offer in partnership with small presses and writers' organisations at iUniverse. The 'Authors Choice' programme for out-of-print books is free, and pays royalties on e-books.



OPEN EBOOK FORUM

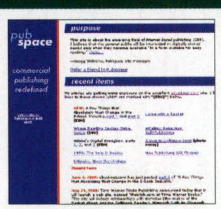
www.openebook.org

Home of the Open e-book Initiative, launched at the world's first e-book conference in October 1998 and tasked with developing a standard on which everyone can agree – before too much money is spent. All the major e-publishing players are involved.

EBOOKNET

www.ebooknet.com

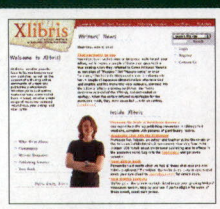
Of interest to old and new authors alike, this is the mother of e-book sites: it contains the latest reviews, breaking news and how-tos, not to mention entertaining and informative columns on the future of publishing. Both a very useful and professional site.



PUBSPACE

www.pubspace.com/home.html

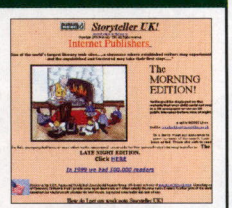
Check out this site for an excellent, level-headed source of the latest news on the e-book revolution. Webmaster Gregg Williams takes a conservative view: 'I believe Internet-based publishing will usher in a new Renaissance'.



XLIBRIS

www.xlibris.com

This looks too good to be true, so read the small print carefully. An online writers' community, US-based Xlibris claim to put the author first. Writers retain all rights and can publish for free in paperback, hardback and electronic format, or pay between $300 and $1,200 for advanced packages.



STORYTELLER

www.storyteller.org.uk

Edited by 'Old Zack', this is a showcase for both established novelists wanting to try new styles and for unpublished writers trying to make their mark. It's home to 23 serialised novels and 200 short stories, plus a selection of children's fiction, poetry and non-fiction.

WORDS: CHRIS HADLEY. PICTURES: STEVE ORINO, PA

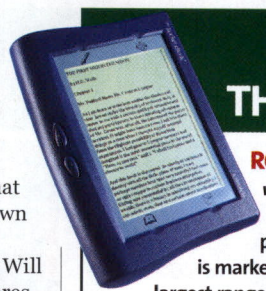
'Someone make this machine propose to me'

the US now offer author programmes, allowing writers to publish a new book or put one of their old books back in print. Some sites are offering the basic service for free, while you pay extra for editing services or a professional cover design. But check out the small print: what are the up-front costs, if any? Who will own the rights to your book? What are the royalties? Will they publicise your book? Will it be available at the large online bookstores like Amazon, or only on the host site?

E-AUTHOR
THE NEXT DICKENS?

Even successful writers are embracing the Internet. David Goodland, 53, has written plays and short stories for BBC Radio, but if a script is turned down there's no feedback. 'On the Internet, I'll know what people think of it from the number of people who "tune in".' Goodland has signed-up with UK Internet start-up Serial Books – it will serialise books, and readers can pay for the instalments.

www.serialbooks.com



THE HARDWARE... Like books, only dearer

ROCKET EBOOK
www.nuvomedia.com

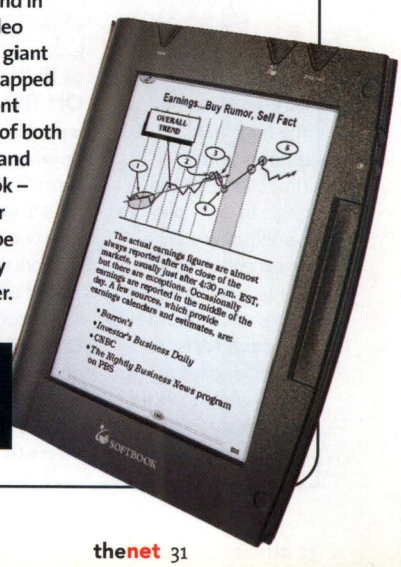
Roughly the size of a paperback, the $199 Rocket is market leader with by far the largest range of titles. The designers have tried to retain some of the 'bookness' of a traditional volume, with little touches such as a scroll bar that shows you how much you've got left to read. The screen can be back-lit, the font size adjusted and the text rotated.

EVERYBOOK
www.everybook.net

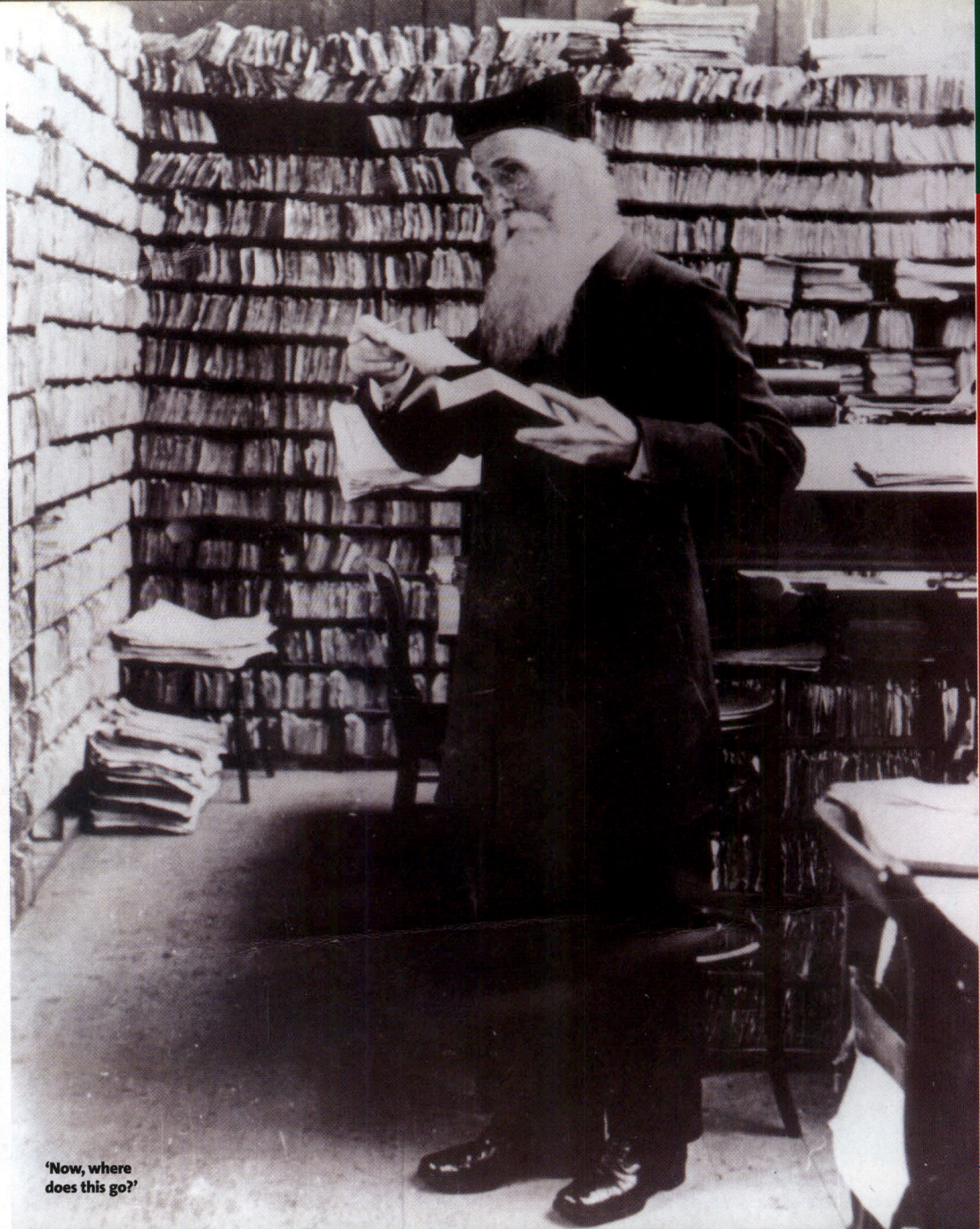
The professional model finally goes on sale later this year for an anticipated $1,800, and with its two screens it looks much more like a traditional book. It's aimed at the academic market, although a cheaper domestic model is planned for early next year.

SOFTBOOK
www.softbook.com

Although billed as the main competitor for the Rocket, the $300 Softbook has fewer titles available. And in January, video technology giant Gemstar snapped up the parent companies of both the Rocket and the Softbook – so the latter might not be with us very much longer.

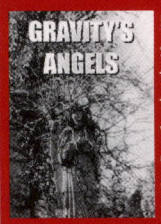


The secret of Spock's Tricorder was revealed



'Now, where does this go?'

E-AUTHOR
SCI-FI COME TRUE



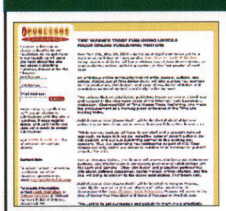
It's hardly surprising that science fiction writers currently dominate Internet publishing – after all, they're more likely to relish mixing their passion for writing with new technology. London-based Trevor Mendham is a computer boffin and runs a Web site for the T-Party, a close-knit community of mainly sci-fi writers who use the site to showcase their work – much of it already published in magazines.

Mendham even uses a Palm Pilot for taking notes and brainstorming when he's on the move. The T-Party recently published their own anthology, *Gravity's Angels*, and Trevor anticipates that future projects could be electronic and a lot less expensive: 'The hardest thing with self publishing is distributing the book, and the Internet's going to make that easier.'

But he's not convinced by e-book hardware. 'I'm always losing paperbacks, leaving them on the train after a few drinks, but I wouldn't want to lose something that cost me a couple of hundred quid...'

www.fnapf.demon.co.uk/t-party

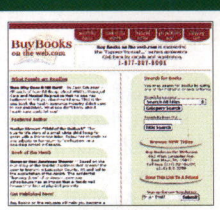
SITES FOR SCRIBBLERS
More places for e-publishing



IPUBLISH

www.ipublish.com

The huge media conglomerate, Time Warner, has a finger in every pie – and e-publishing will be no exception. The company's answer to Xlibris will be launching soon, and TW is currently soliciting manuscripts to include in its library for electronic publication.



BUY BOOKS ON THE WEB

www.buybookson theweb.com

According to this print-on-demand publisher, only two percent of authors ever get published. But for a set-up fee, Buy Books On The Web will produce, promote and sell your book exclusively through its Web site.

BARNES AND NOBLE

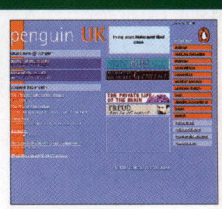
www.barnesandnoble.com/ebook

America's favourite bookseller now has an e-book section. It contains lots of freebies for Glassbook and Microsoft Reader, the full range of Rocket Editions, plus it also has various software downloads and all the hardware for sale.

THE LAST BOOK

washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/style/thelastbook

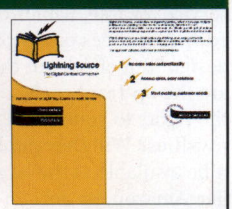
One day in Austin, Texas, 78-year-old Harvey Ross unveils his latest invention: the BookBuilder – 'a nine-foot-long... machine that looks mighty like the contraption that launched Frankenstein's monster.' So begins Linton Weeks' article on the future of the book.



PENGUIN BOOKS

www.penguin.co.uk

E-books face the same prejudices that led many booksellers to refuse to stock the new-fangled paperbacks back in 1936, when Allen Lane founded Penguin. Penguin's site publishes extracts from some of the world's best authors. Watch this space.



LIGHTNING SOURCE

www.lightningsource.com

Having pioneered print-on-demand as Lightning Print, this American company has recently changed its name to reflect its move into e-books. However, it tends to work directly with publishers rather than authors.

There are an ever-growing number of options, so don't just grab the first deal you come across. Most of these services take advantage of recent developments in the printing industry to produce your book inexpensively to order – something that was impossible a few years ago, when you had to print at least a few hundred copies to make the exercise economically viable. But many of these publishers are now branching out into e-books, so your readers have the choice of ordering a paperback, a hardback or an e-book, all at different prices, and each offering different royalty percentages.

SELF-PUBLISHING

In the early years of the book trade, writers sold their work on subscription, taking advance orders to cover the cost of printing. Writers even stood on street corners, selling books out of a suitcase. And today, people still pay for their books to be bound and printed, handing over large sums of money to 'vanity' publishers. But if you're prepared to get your head around some software (and be aware that unless you're prepared to spend a lot of time publicising your work, it stands a good chance of being lost in cyberspace forever), you can upload your book to your own site...

Today, people are still paying 'vanity' publishers

Here's the sort of thing you should be offering: give readers a choice of formats – some will want to print it out, others will be happy to read it on screen; place an extract on your site in a screen-readable font such as Microsoft's freely-available Verdana, so that punters can get a taste of what you have on offer; and provide a choice of formats which readers can download. Finally, stick to well-established formats such as Microsoft Word or an Adobe Acrobat '.pdf' file.

The more adventurous might like to explore the Rocket e-book site and download a free copy of RocketWriter, which converts text or HTML into a Rocket Edition, readable on their free Desktop Reader. Hot off the presses is Microsoft's free ReaderWorks Standard Edition, which will allow your book to be read using their Reader for Pocket PCs.

THE FUTURE

While e-publishing is still in its infancy in the US, in the UK it's only just going into labour. The large publishers are still waiting to see what formats are going to come out on top and how security issues will be resolved (Stephen King's book was reportedly hacked in less than two days). 'I don't think anyone's going to dominate this [market] for a while,' says Penguin's Andrew Rosenheim. But he doesn't doubt that e-books have a promising future: 'I think it will be a significant part of the market within the next five to 10 years, but still a minority. I do think by 2050 the analogy that Microsoft uses of the book becoming like the horse – which is to say a recreational vehicle rather than the industrial engine of choice – is probably correct.'

In the 15th century, when Johannes Gutenberg changed the world by inventing moveable type, not everyone was happy. Printers tried to make the first books look like manuscripts, because, after all, who wanted to read a printed book? Some readers went to great lengths to avoid the new medium; Cardinal Giuliano della Rovere famously commissioned a scribe to turn a printed edition of Appian's *Civil Wars* back into a manuscript.

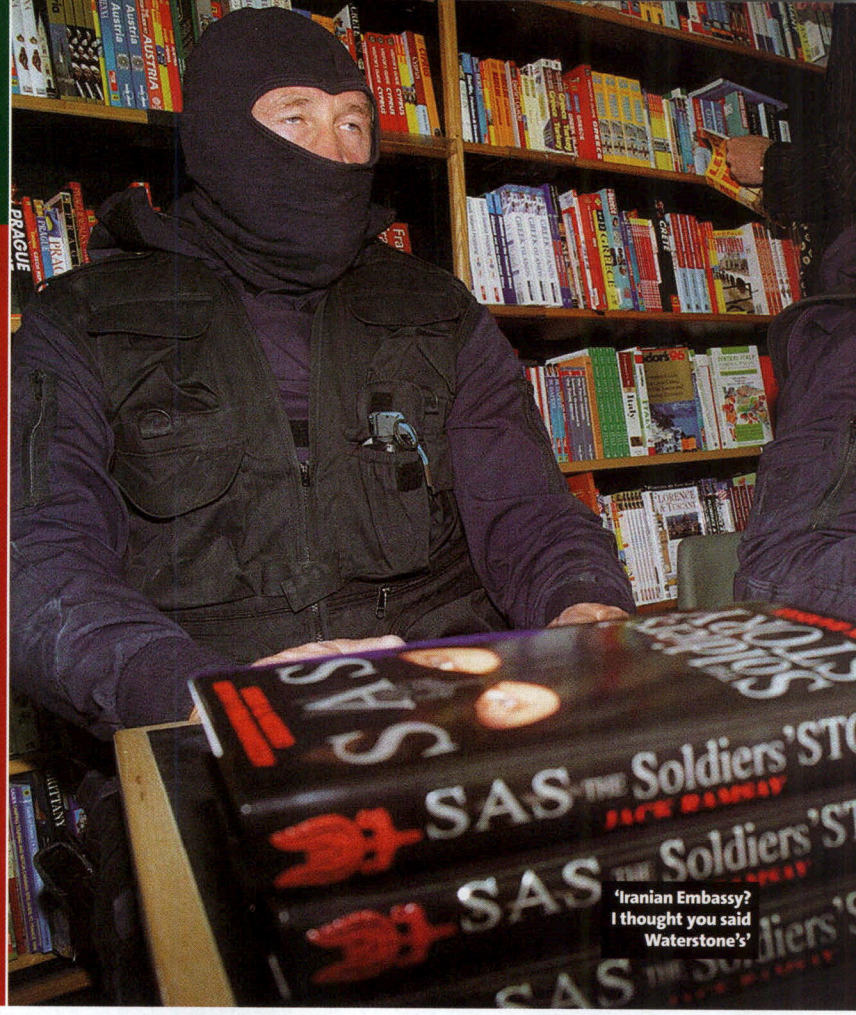
As Gutenberg found, traditions can take a long time to disappear. It will take years, probably decades, for the reading public to embrace electronic books. But writers would do well to start embracing them today.

E-AUTHOR
HYPERTEXT NOVELIST

Geoff Ryman wrote his first story for the local paper near his home in Canada when he was just six years old. He moved to the UK after graduating, is the author of several successful novels, and has won a number of awards. His latest book, *253*, started as a hypertext novel. 'It took two years,' says Ryman. 'HTML encoding by hand is very boring.'

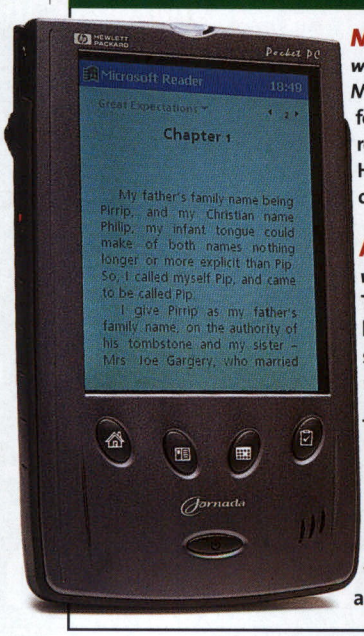
A paper version was eventually published in 1998. 'It's now conventional wisdom that books online help sell the printed version, but that was new then. *253* sold well enough – over 30,000 copies – to change how the publishers looked at me.'

www.ryman-novel.com



'Iranian Embassy? I thought you said Waterstone's'

...AND THE SOFTWARE
Turn books into bytes



MICROSOFT READER

www.microsoft.com/reader

Microsoft claims its ClearType technology is the best screen-readable format in the world – and it's part of this piece of software for reading and listening to e-books on the latest 'pocket' PCs like this Hewlett Packard (left). It's not hard to imagine getting through a complete novel using it. A PC version will be available later this year.

ADOBE ACROBAT

www.adobe.com

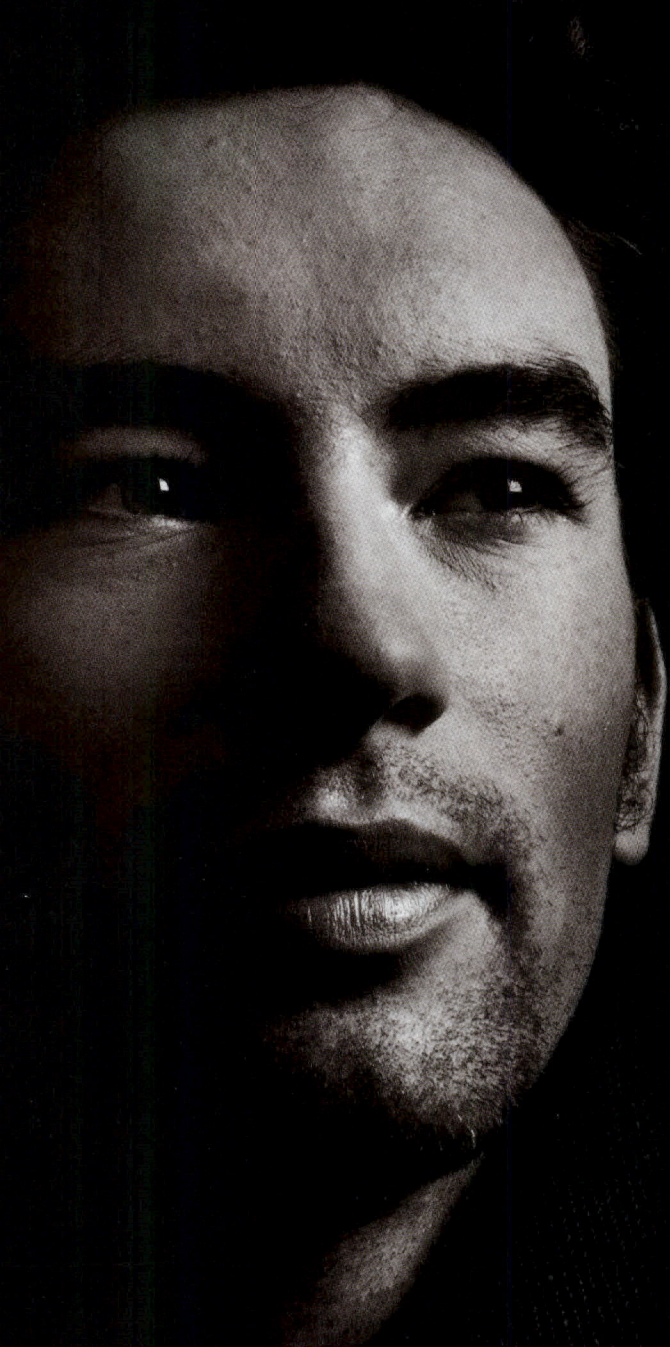
The long-established Acrobat format will potentially be the biggest loser with the coming of the e-book. Adobe is claiming its software still offers the best solution for on-screen reading, but the smart money is going elsewhere. The software's annoying habit of jumping too soon to the next page is a major problem for anyone trying to read novels on-screen.

GLASSBOOK

www.glassbook.com

Get the basic PC software as a free download, along with 30 books. After a bit of fiddling with the zoom and sharpening controls it makes for a pleasant read.

GET WHAT YOU WANT FROM THE INTERNET



Do you want **FREE** unlimited Internet calls and a totally **FREE**, fast and reliable service that gives you superb content and helps you get the information you want quickly and easily?

If so, you can have it all with LineOne:

FREE Fast and reliable Internet access
FREE Unlimited Internet calls
FREE Great UK content
FREE 5 email addresses
FREE 50MB of web space for your website
FREE Controls to protect children's access
FREE 24hr online customer support
FREE Multimedia CD-ROM worth up to £29.99
FREE £5 amazon.co.uk book voucher

Just spend £5 or more a month on national and international phone calls with Quip! – the new low cost telephone company which can save you up to 60% on national and international phone calls. There is no need to change your current phone line or number, simply pay a one-off charge of £20 for a telephone adapter that plugs into your existing socket.* To get your free calls simply join LineOne and go to www.lineone.net/freeinternet

For your FREE Internet pack call

0800 111 210

or visit

www.lineone.net

LINEONE

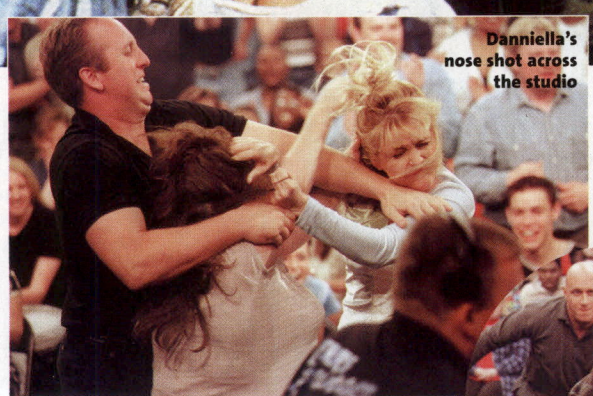
DEFINE YOUR OWN UNIVERSE

*Subject to availability and terms and conditions stated at www.lineone.net/freeinternet.
This offer is not available to business users. Non offer calls charged at local rates.

WHEN WILL I BE FAMOUS?

Do you hunger for celebrity? Do you want to be featured in glossy magazines, your haircut and clothes copied by hordes of adoring fans? Then use the Internet as your path to fame!

The Riverdance cast celebrate Flatley's exit

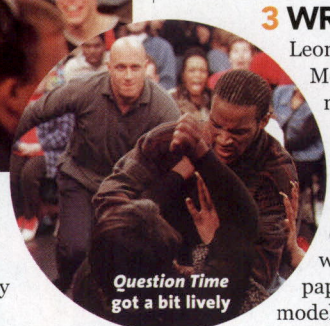

Danniella's nose shot across the studio

1 GET ON TV

Where better to break into the big time than on TV? Contrary to what your careers teacher would have you think, there are loads of ways to get on the box. Blag tickets from ***www.bbc.co.uk/tickets***, or more adventurous types could try ***www.bbc.co.uk/castingcall*** to see what kind of saddos are going to be fly-on-the-walled next. On the same page, there's a chance to be *really* big in the Imax version of the *Human Body* documentary.

Eager gameshow contestants can learn how to apply to be on everything from *Watercolour Challenge* to *Prickly Heat* at ***www.qwertyuiop.co.uk/gs/contestants/index.htm***, or if you fancy a crack at the top US game show, *Jeopardy*, try ***www.spe.sony.com/tv/shows/jeopardy***.

However, to really grab people's attention, get on a talk show. Grill a politician from the audience of the *Jonathan Dimbleby Show* (***www.jonathandimbleby.co.uk/The_Audience***), then apply to appear on angst-fests *Trisha* (***www.angliatv.co.uk/trisha***) and *Esther* (***www.meridiantv.co.uk/esther***). Or chuck taste and decency further out the window and appear on *Rikki Lake* (***www.spe.sony.com/tv/shows/rikki***), who's looking for 'Men over 400lbs cheating on their lovers'. But for real trailer trash, only Jerry Springer will do (***www.jerryspringer.com/showtickets.asp***). The former mayor of Cleveland's recent topics include 'I'm marrying my sister' and 'I'm in a lesbian affair with my niece'. Now *that* should get you noticed.


Question Time got a bit lively

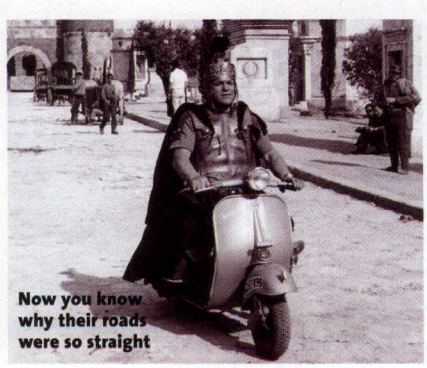
2 GET IN MOVIES

The call is out for a very big star indeed. US studio DreamWorks are looking to cast Harry Potter and friends: check out ***www.harrypotter.com/cmp/casting*** for details. However, if you're not 14 years old, don't despair – the Net has plenty for budding thesps. For a listing of where to go to learn to be a tree or hold a gun in the fashionable 'sideways' manner, go to ***www.drama.ac.uk***. Alternatively, follow in the footsteps of Dustin, Bobby and Brando and enrol for Lee Strasberg's Method classes at ***www.strasberg.com***. And top drama coach Jeremy Whelan's site (***www.jeremy-whelan-acting.com***) has heaps of acting tips, lists of agents and casting directors to become best friends with, plus books to read and courses to take at home.

Plenty of Hollywood stars got their big breaks while working as extras, so take a look at ***www.gmxgroup.com*** and ***www.castingcollective.co.uk*** for a list of what's shooting. It helps to be a little, er, *unusual* if you're after this kind of work – the Casting Collective is currently looking for Arab bodybuilders for the sequel to *The Mummy*, as well as very skinny men, Goths and Chinese people.

3 WRITE A VIRUS

Leonardo's a right pain and Melissa's hell to get rid of. No, not annoying friends, but computer viruses. If you've got the technical know-how and an anarchic sensibility, writing a world-crippling computer virus is a great way to get your name in the papers. Take as your role model the masterminds behind the ILOVEYOU virus, believed to be a group of Philippine students at the Amable Mendoza Aguiluz Computer College. Reomel Ramones was the first to be arrested, but it later fell to Onel de Guzman to admit he may


Now you know why their roads were so straight

WORDS: VICTORIA WILLIAMS; PICTURES: KOBAL, PA, NEWSMAKERS, REX, ONLINE

HOW TO BEHAVE WHEN YOU'RE A STAR

The public expects certain standards from its celebrities. So once you've made it big, here are a few pointers to follow...

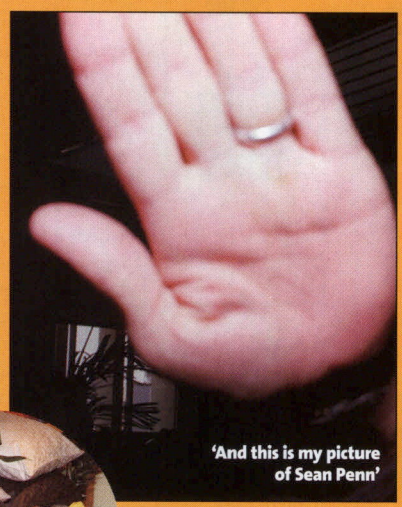
1. BE A SLAVE TO FASHION
Try ***fashion.about.com/shopping/fashion/msubcelebrity*** and ***www.teen.com/fashion/beastar*** for tips on how to shop like a genuine *fashionista*.

2. CONSUME CONSPICUOUSLY
A little something that glitters is always good (***www.diamond.com***), or look for pointers at the millionaire's favourite Web site, ***www.millionaire.com***.

Meg wasn't prepared for the Cacherel lady

3. GET YOURSELF A PSYCHIC
Stephen O'Brien (***www.stephenobrien.freeserve.co.uk***) can put you in touch with all sorts of celebrity spirit guides, including Marilyn, Judy Garland and Marlene Deitrich.

4. SUPPORT AN APPROPRIATE CHARITY


'And this is my picture of Sean Penn'

If you can't make up your mind which to go for, ***www.charity-commission.gov.uk*** lists all 180,000 registered charities for your perusal. Or set up your own foundation, then be exposed as a cheapskate by ***www.thesmokinggun.com*** which lists which celebrity foundations could be giving more (Don King and Mike Tyson apparently haven't paid out a cent in two years, and Donald Trump's a bit of a tight git too).

5. MAKE SURE THE PRESS FOLLOW YOUR EVERY MOVE
Email your movements in advance to The Associated Press (***www.ap.org***), thus guaranteeing maximum tabloid coverage.

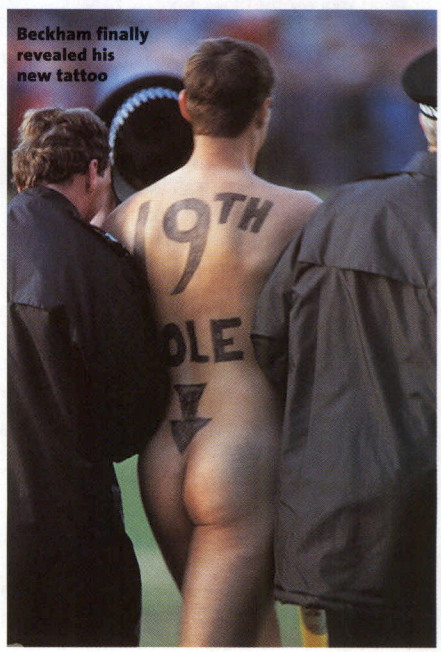
6. HAVE A BREAKDOWN
No true star has missed out on the opportunity of a 'tired and emotional' spell at a top clinic. Painkillers, cocaine, booze... whatever it takes for you to hit rock bottom, get cured then battle with your addictions for the rest of your frenzied life. The Priory can be contacted at ***www.thepriory-hospital.co.uk***, or the mother of all rehabs, The Betty Ford Center (***www.bettyfordcenter.org***) is waiting to welcome you on the other side of the pond.

Streak across Columbus State in Georgia – there's not much else to do

notice? Well, the good thing about getting your kit off in real life is that people really *do* notice. Show a bit of flesh and you'll be in all the papers – even the Women's Institute has chucked out the jam and *Jerusalem* for a charity calendar (***www.nfwi.org.uk/home***).

Erica Roe of 70s Twickenham fame carved out a nice living making personal appearances, and the man who streaked across the stage at the Oscars behind David Niven is still featured in TV shows today. At ***saber.colstate.edu/issues98/092298/092298streak.htm*** there's an open letter from the Ents Officer inviting people to streak across the campus of Columbus State University in Georgia – where, presumably, there's not much else to do. For some more enthusiastic tips on where to strip to get the most attention, check out ***www.streaking.org*** (you can also download a screensaver where a naked man will dash back and forth across your screen).

Of course, once you're a *bona fide* celeb, nudity can become a bit of a problem. Actresses frequently suffer the indignity of having their heads pasted onto someone else's naked body. However, legitimate 'body doubles' are big business. Remember the *Pretty Woman* poster? The woman who supplied Julia Robert's body is Shelley Michelle, and she has her own site at ***www.bodydouble.com***, where you can get tips on how to fill in for your favourite stars and join Shelley's agency. Try ***www.virtualcasting.net*** for other body-doubling opportunities.



Beckham finally revealed his new tattoo

have 'inadvertently' unleashed the virus on the world. Nice one, Onel.

If you're looking for similar international infamy, be sure to leave clues to your identity in the code of the virus (de Guzman inserted the line 'I Hate School', which you wouldn't think would narrow it down much). Once you've brought the modern world to its knees, you can read about your exploits on sites like ***www.cnn.com/tech*** or ***www.antivirus.com/vinfo***. And for those of you who want to be famous for catching the bad guys, why not become an anti-hacker, helping the white hats to combat new and ever more complex viruses? There's ***www.f-secure.com/vir-info*** for a huge list of every virus you might come up against; and ***kumite.com/myths*** deals with hoax virus alerts – another good way to get some attention, although you will lose most of your friends...

FOREIGN NEWS
FBI detains Filipinos in 'Love Bug' virus hunt

5 TAKE YOUR CLOTHES OFF

Ever had one of those dreams where you're naked but no one seems to be taking any

4 BE THE NEXT MAHIR

Surely one of the strangest routes to fame ever. Mahir Cagri, an unknown Turk from Ismir, was catapulted to stardom when the address of his exuberant, badly translated Web site (***members.xoom.com/primall/mahir***) started getting passed around the Net. His signature greeting, 'I Kiss You', has become an international catchphrase, with some particularly sad fans going so far as to send in pictures of themselves holding I Kiss You banners (see ***www.krstdesign.com/liliana/mahir/index.html*** for details – and a great screensaver). Fan clubs are proliferating, like ***www.lovetheturk.com***, and the Great Man himself was seen hobnobbing with the Net's elite at the recent Webby Awards (***www.webbyawards.com***) and even invited on *Eurotrash* (***www.rapido.co.uk/en***).

If you're looking to claw your way to celebrity status the same way, construct a site that people will want to email details of to all their friends. Great jokes, disgusting photos or video clips are good – something along the lines of that unfortunate zookeeper who accidently stuck his head up an elephant's arse, or the dancing baby (***www.dancingbaby.co.uk***) that got so famous it made it onto *Ally McBeal*. Try ***www.atomfilms.com*** for some examples of cool downloads to send to people, or ***www.jokes.com*** for (a few) laughs.

6 SPAM PEOPLE

Whether you need to increase traffic to your Web site or are just looking to get your name spread through thousands of emails, spamming is definitely the way to go – as long as you've got the skin of a rhino to deal with all the hate-mail being returned. A lot of search engines and newsgroups have ways to block obvious spams, but there are ways round the filters for the truly dedicated. Try ***www.epsilon.co.uk/roadmaps/rmap2*** for tips on using software such as Listserv to send mail to every member of a target newgroup, while design company Deadlock (***www.deadlock.com***) has some good spamming messageboards.

Cross-posting newsgroups – that is, sending the same, usually inappropriate message to a whole bunch of newsgroups at the same time – is also a good way to get yourself noticed. Warnings of the dire consequences of spamming can be found at ***www.spamdb.com*** – but in the never-ending quest for fame, who cares?

8 CLOSE A DOTCOM BUSINESS

The only thing the papers like more than building up young entrepreneur types is knocking them down again when they hit difficulties. A good, juicy fiasco is just what the media is after – as recently shown by Boo, the Internet clothing 'retailer' soon to be relaunched as part of ***www.fashionmall.com***. All you have to do is convince a lot of people to loan you vast sums of start-up cash. Spend some of it on designing an irritating and hard-to-access Web site with far too much animation and fancy graphics for the average shopper, then use the rest on buying a huge stock of cool designer gear. Add a bizarre and uninformative, but still expensive, marketing campaign (what were those TV ads about?) and don't offer any discounts on the goods until it's too late. Then just sit back and watch your business fold. It's really very easy.

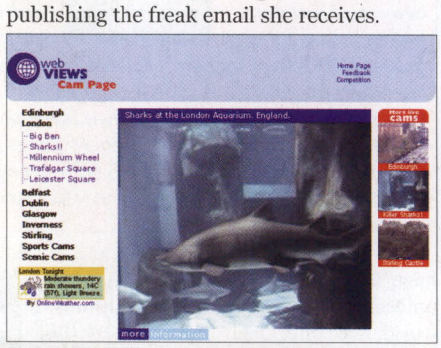
A good, juicy fiasco is just what the media is after, as shown by Boo.com

9 POSE ON A WEBCAM

If you're serious about fame, you'll have a nose for a camera – and with the proliferation of Webcams, you're spoilt for choice. Disappointed not to get the lead in *Gladiator*? Head over to ***www.capitolium.org/eng/virtuale/liveview.htm*** for a controllable live cam with a great view of the Coliseum. Another ancient monument that would provide a great backdrop for a spot of self-promotion is the Wailing Wall in Jerusalem (***aish.com/wallcam***); the image is updated every minute. Closer to home, try the Trafalgar Square cam (***www.webviews.co.uk/london/trafalgarsq.php3#***) which has ten different views to choose from.

Other feats of publicity-friendly derring-do worth a try are standing on a live volcano – ***laprensa.com.sv/camara_en_vivo/camara_en_vivo.asp*** has images of the San Salvador volcano – or go for a swim in the shark tank at the London Aquarium (***www.webviews.co.uk/london/sharks.php3***). Careful timing is needed or else your fame might turn out to be posthumous.

Of course, you can always set up your own cam if you want to be permanently on view. The original, and still the best, is Jennicam (***www.jennicam.org***), where you can see pretty much everything you want of Jenni, down to her ladybird tattoo. She even hosts an online chat show. A recent pretender to Jenni's crown is Aimee, a redheaded Texan who can be found at ***members.aol.com/heyaimee/cam.html***. The Texan rose even goes as far as publishing the freak email she receives.



Cuddles aged better than Harris

7 START A DOTCOM BUSINESS

You can hardly open the paper these days without having to read about some bloke who dropped out of college to play on his computer and now heads a huge Internet enterprise. Some even have the gall to bitch that they can't get their hand on the loot immediately. Ernesto Schmitt, chairman of Peoplesound (***www.peoplesound.com***), says he has a 'miserable life. It's paper wealth. You can't realise it for 10 years.' Poor love.

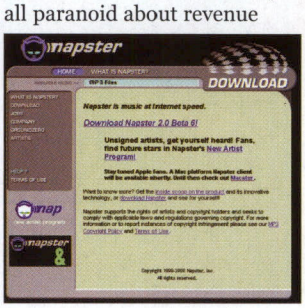
Unfortunately, the strategy for creating vast Internet riches is not easy to pin down (if it were, there wouldn't be any staff left on *the net*). One thing that does help is to be a woman. When ***www.lastminute.com*** floated earlier this year, the press was so full of Martha Lane-Fox that her (male) business partner hardly got a look in. And Serena Doshi, founder of ***www.Liv4now.com***, also gets lots of column inches, and makes the Most Datable list at *Tatler* (***www.tatler.co.uk***).

The male business partner of Martha Lane-Fox hardly gets a look-in

10 DO SOMETHING ILLEGAL

A recent ruling in the States declared that ***www.juliaroberts.com*** should belong to Julia Roberts the movie star – which seems a bit unfair on Julia Roberts the hairdresser. Jules had been 'cybersquatted' by an enterprising bod who had registered various stars' names and refused to give them back. Cue the press interviews and a big public court case. And here in the UK, bean-flicking author Jeanette Winterson recently sued Mark Hogarth, owner of ***www.writerdomains.com***, who had appropriated her name for a Web site, along with Martin Amis and various other famous scribes. Check out a site like ***www.netbenefit.com*** to see if there are any 'famous name' sites you can still bag before they all go.

Alternatively, use the Internet to get yourself sued for copyright infringement. Shawn Fanning, founder of ***www.napster.com***, the service that allows people to swap MP3 files easily over the Net, has been sued by heavy-rock bores Metallica, as well as by the Recording Industry Association of America. They're all paranoid about revenue losses. All this does, of course, is make the Napster site even more of a must-visit.



Libel is also an effective way to generate personal publicity. Just post some outrageous opinions on a few bulletin boards or chatrooms (try ***www.demon.co.uk*** for some popular boards), then sit back and watch the press coverage stack up.

11 MUSCLE IN

Every day the papers and magazines are full of pictures of celebs leaving hip bars and restaurants – and there are always a few lurkers in the background. To be one of the gang – and gain fame by association – hang out near London's new Sanderson Hotel or the Light Bar at the St. Martin's Lane Hotel (***www.thisislondon.co.uk*** will guide you towards them). Other good spots are The Met Bar, The Ivy, The Groucho Club and Soho House. Once you reckon you've got your mug in a few pics, go and check yourself out at a gossip sites like ***www.hello-magazine.com***. And if you chance upon a celeb in the wild, sling your arm around the hapless star, have a passer-by take a snap and send the picture in to 'NetStalking' (***www.uploaded.com***).

Alternatively, you could always put a bit of gossip out there about how you're the new romance in the life of Nicole Appleton, or Robbie Williams. Try ***www.hintmag.com*** for fashion industry gossip, ***www.pagesix.com*** for tittle-tattle about the New York scene and ***www.peoplenews.com*** for celeb sighting news.

WHO GETS THE MOST HITS ON YAHOO?

Tom was told to act surprised

Bill Gates	150,469
Tom Cruise	33,347
Sarah Michelle Gellar	24,482
George Clooney	14,483
Liz Hurley	14,001
Hugh Grant	8,448
Minnie Driver	6,974
David Beckham	5,748
Tim Henman	3,784
Camilla Parker-Bowles	1,307
Carol Vorderman	630
Anthea Turner	597
Frank Skinner	365
Victoria Beckham	263
Dale Winton	244
Les Dennis	205
Amanda Holden	74
Bill Giles	57
Letitia Dean	22
Jane MacDonald	11

Anyone for a cruise?

Liz was shy about her shadow puppetry

12 BEFRIEND A STAR

Being a celeb's new best friend is not easy to achieve unless you're a yoga instructor or spiritual guru. However, you *can* get into the inner circle if you're prepared to work at it. Stars are surrounded by a vast entourage of hangers-on, so all you have to do is provide an invaluable service and you're in. How about training at the classy Norland Nanny School (***www.norland.co.uk***), so you can look after little Lourdes, Gaia or Phoenix Chi? And with Winslet, Zeta Jones and Ball all about to drop, there should be plenty of work to go round.

If kids aren't your thing, how about becoming a butler? The International Guild of Professional Butlers (***www.butlersguild.co/uk***) has courses for those interested in the life. Chauffeurs should go to ***www.sovereign-chauffeur.co.uk/training***. Finally, become a celebrity chef. The hours are killing, the work hot and menial, but you could have your restaurant stuffed full of fawning celebs every night. Go along to ***www.eggsbenefit.com*** for catering vacancies.

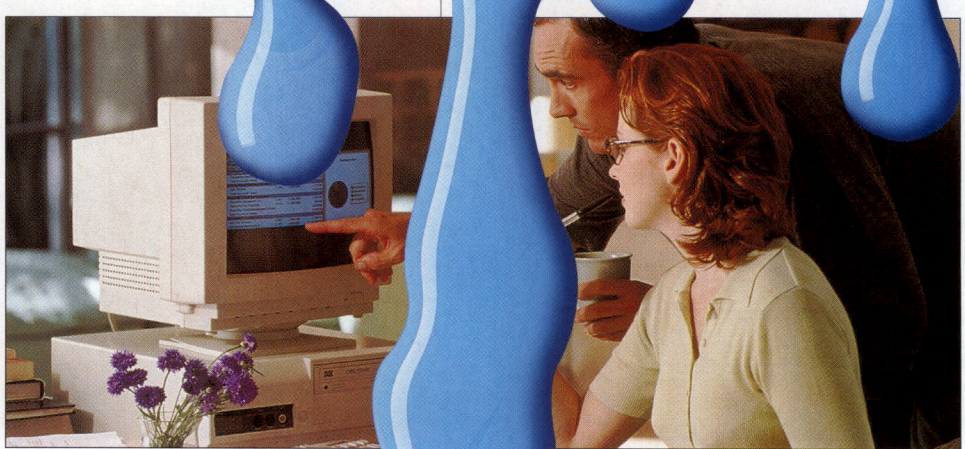
'Who's the squirt in the middle?'

WWW.VITA
LET MUSIC IN

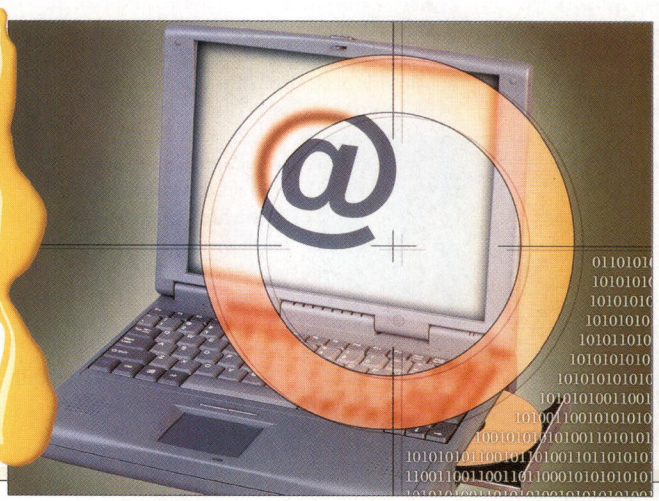
to *reedo*
on *asy and*

s re
the of
cy ice
onc tart
s ring
nc ilent,
w at to
fr quet
The of
ds ard
rs w and
ge w ow
wh ey the
que W oing
on Ne d as
frequently a are all
becoming surfers.
Increasingly, ectly to our
favourite site
And little by he Internet is
revealing its fulness. It is
becoming mu ore concrete and
we are start nderstand what
it's for. We re to find and
buy previ ndable books;
we can go our financial
site and be n in a day by
following the rs of finance; in
our role as virtual talent scouts, we

which i
ownloa
To quote a fa
become one o
Internet: "The N
fantastic things
parents didn't
importantly, tha
uncles and
everything, di
careful: to pres manity,
our ability to judge r freedom
of choice, we had to paradise.



The «Sensation Four» top the et charts



The most talked-about case in the MP3 alternative hit parade and leaders of the "Top Downloads" of songs from Vitaminic (www.vitaminic.it, the red-hot Italian music site), the "Sensation Four" have arrived. They have been compared to the Liverpool Four for their musical style and for the interplanetary success they are now enjoying.

It's a success that is completely virtual because no one has ever seen them playing and singing on a real stage, in flesh and blood. We can admire them in their special effects-filled concerts only on the Web. Little hair on their heads, unimpressive physiques, they've been chasing after a success that has only arrived now thanks to Vitaminic. Says Alan, the group's spokesman: "It's not true that real socialism is a failure. On the Internet there are no privileges and we're all equal. On the Web, success is decided by real people rather than being dictated by the usual economic interests. Vitaminic – that's musical socialism for you. Unfortunately the world wasn't able to appreciate our music before; for twenty years we were in the shadows, unjustly crushed by the usual stars. But now our time has come!"

You can discover the latest sensation on: www.vitaminic.it/sensation_four.

Servell

MINIC.CO.UK TO YOUR LIFE

at

N t e of t "incub New E financing successfu stars of e s of new com draw a paralle class we coul at the nies are the be w and raised. Powe ill and hay are neede ery heir development. it lied by the vario cub the form of technologies ead cash.

Incubators have bec egular rock stars. In front of th urious offices stand mile-lo ues of young, sun-tanned neurs who would give th or an autograph - better on a cheque of course.

Toros, the nown entrepreneur, ca th the idea. He was the fi ubator of the New Economy. In 1996, the your Toros, already from a very rich fa and intent on making a big spla n the world of finance, was wa g through the streets of New busy, d ed, a sea or an gene rofit. C lots of it. The bi day as he was through the wir poultry shop. The of eggs, perfectly grey cardboard amber-coloured eg the setting sun an disposed mind they s dollars. Or rather (a superior genius of make dollars with. for finance didn't stop t

e god M ollar King s . "To ke money you have y, just like if you to ma gs you have to e hens is analogy - newhat o for the laymen ong us, to e truth - was the t of one of the firs great ghts of modern finance.

os' reasoning went ah more less like this: "The pr em is he. If an egg is an idea, a equal terest and efficiency, the w ning g will be the one that's dy to e eaten before the oth That he will win out on th t!" he intuition took sh is ead that American en rs would be needing new es that were faster at laying ggs. Even one would be enough, but it had to be right away. An incubator was needed. An incubator of ideas. The golden egg had been laid!

T ed in Th ne so pivota lay in the Fi um of Dubai. ATOR SEEKS OUNG ENTRE GOOD IDEAS TO FIN first d didn't attract hou . After a survey, ed t the word "incub ch s now fan ar in s actually neolo he meaning one u d. made so eople fri d a turned ot f: "'T uba sounds ller Silence It's too close to ds so pedagog erved him well which appeared once again in T NG YOUNG EN TH GOOD IDEAS E." This ad had such ary success that Toros w ed

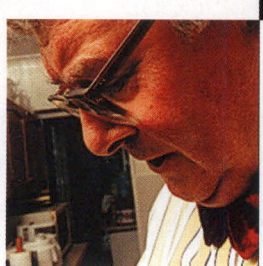
WWW.VITAMINIC.CO.UK
vitaminic
THE MUSIC EVOLUTION

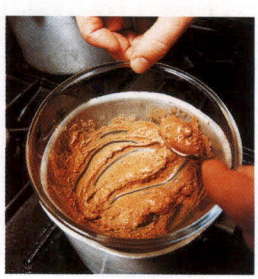
Does your poussin come out carbonised? Are your sprouts like shrapnel? Never fear – *the net* can rescue your dinner. We test the tastiest food sites and trawl the Web for inspirational recipes...

DINNER IS SERVED

IF YOU'D KEYED THE WORD 'RECIPES' into the average search engine a year ago, you'd have got little more than a glut of American sites, bulging with measurements based on 'cups' and ingredients such as cilantro and eggplant (that's coriander and aubergine to us). It's all change though, with food following on from wine, gardening, and er, everything else as the next big thing on the Net in the UK.

If you needed further proof, as *the net* went to press Delia Smith announced plans to launch a site, in time for Christmas. It's estimated that Delia will generate millions of pounds a year in online sales of ingredients and cooking utensils. Well, she can strip an entire kitchenware shop of its supplies of a particular pan by the flick of a whisk, so the effect of her joining forces with the global selling power of the World Wide Web is potentially awesome.





CAN THE NET COOK?

Even though Delia doesn't arrive online until Christmas, there are plenty of sites to help you out in the kitchen now. But can they really turn a nation increasingly dependent on readymade meals into a regular little Jamie Oliver, with a *soupçon* of the Fat Ladies thrown in?

In order to find out, we enlisted the help of the esteemed Kenneth Harry Putt of the Wine and Food Academy in south London, and his assistant Mikhail Lumanov – readers may recall these accomplished chefs and *bon viveurs* from our wine-tasting feature. You can find out how they got on cooking some of the recipes currently available for downloading from the Web on the following pages; we've even given you the recipes to try for yourself. And in case these featured sites aren't enough to sate your appetite, we scurry through what we reckon to be some of the tastiest food pages on the Internet...

Ever since Fanny Craddock and Johnny took to the small screen with a mixing bowl, whisk and a few ingredients, cookery on telly has been as compulsive as eating chocolate.

So it's little wonder that one of the big Net launches this year, Foodoo (***www.foodoo.com***), revolves around a clutch of celebrity chefs. Gordon Ramsay, Gary Rhodes, Antony Worrall Thompson, John Torode, Sophie Grigson and Ken Hom are all part-owners of the site, and its co-founder, Red Johnson, previously producer of food shows on the Carlton Food Network, describes it as the 'the online home for well-known cooks and chefs, but it's also for people who care about what they eat and want to talk about it.'

Each chef has their own dedicated channel with recipes and features, and non-celebrity dishes have been added to make the 2,000-strong recipe database as comprehensive as possible. Ultimately, you'll be able to buy all the ingredients you need for a particular recipe from the site.

If the above line-up of culinary expertise isn't poncey enough for you, though, get along to ***www.foodinthenude.com***. Despite the fact that they used

'...and today, kids, we have Bambi á la carrots...'

Doughnuts as soft as Fanny's

Jo Guest painted as a pineapple to launch it, this is a classy site, decked out with arty photomontages of people and food. Recipes live up to the image, with starters including bass with caviar and such main dishes as iced prune and almond terrine.

The husband-and-wife team behind the site, Nick and Rachel Sellers, have been working on the project for 14 months and will shortly be adding online cooking in RealVideo – 'it'll be very raw,' says Rachel (hopefully referring to the style of the programme rather than the end result). Even if the recipes aren't up your street, there's plenty of incentive to visit, including the chance to win £1 million later in the year.

If your food needs are more everyday, ***www.e-licious.co.uk*** (featured right) offers a shopping list and menu planner facility, plus the chance to trade recipes with other e-licious users around the globe. And don't worry about the subtleties of your lemon soufflé recipe being lost in translation into Norwegian, since e-licious has a special multi-lingual database technology.

If you missed the dancing cucumber advertising Carlton Food Network's Simply Food site, there's an opportunity to download it at ***www.simplyfood.co.uk***. Far more useful, though, are the '10 Things to do With...' and the 'I Need Inspiration' features.

Meanwhile, on the other channel, ***www.bbc.co.uk/food*** offers a similar well-rounded experience. You can cut to their celebrity chef's recipe and read what others who've made it think ('lovely juberly, very pukka, I'm pleased with that,' in the case of Jamie Oliver's baked Jerusalem artichokes). There's also an excellent food glossary.

'We plan to do cookery TV on the Net soon – it'll be very raw'

Two more pans, please

SUPERMARKET SITES

Most of the main supermarket sites have recipe sections on their sites; Sainsbury's and Somerfield are in action on these pages. Asda's offering at ***www.asda.co.uk/foodload.html*** is good for vegetarian recipes and healthy eating advice, while, as you'd expect, Waitrose's excellent site at ***www.waitrose.com/***

SOMERFIELD

'A big vol au vent?' No, that's a summer puff

The high street store has done a good job of translating its cost-conscious image to the Net – it even shows you how to eat for under a £1 and there's plenty of calorie and nutritional info. This recipe was its pudding of the month.

CHOCOLATE AND STRAWBERRY PUFFS

1 x 340g block Jus-Rol Puff Pastry
100g (3½oz) white or milk chocolate
200ml whipping cream, whipped
16-20 Somerfield strawberries

METHOD

■ 1 Preheat oven to 220C (425F, gas mark 7).

■ 2 Roll out the pastry to 36cm x 18cm. Cut into four 9cm (3 1/2in) squares, carefully make a cut (but do not cut right through) 1cm from the edge of each pastry square.

■ 3 Place on a baking sheet, brush the edge with a little milk.

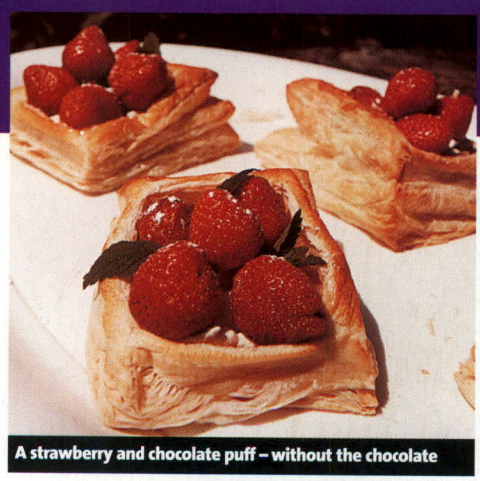
■ 4 Place in the preheated oven for approximately 10 minutes until well risen and golden.

■ 5 Cool on a wire rack. Remove the centre of each square.

■ 6 Melt the chocolate in a bowl over a pan of simmering water. Divide the melted chocolate between the four squares, brushing it around the inside. Allow to set.

■ 7 Add the cream and arrange the strawberries on top. Sprinkle with icing sugar.

SERVES 4



A strawberry and chocolate puff – without the chocolate

PREP AND COOKING

It's not too outlandish to expect that you'd be able to buy the ingredients for a Somerfield Pudding of the Month in a Somerfield store, said Kenneth. 'But all I could buy were the strawberries. I ask you...'

Also, the recipe should have specified cooking chocolate because the Cadbury's bar we used instead of the unobtainable white chocolate wouldn't melt properly and was declared (loudly) 'unusable' by Mikhail. With some quick thinking, he used jam instead.

DID IT TASTE GOOD?

After a shaky start in life, yes. It looked great – just like the picture. And although Mikhail's comment of 'It's a big vol au vent – filled,' sounded damning, even he came round to it. Portion-wise, though, they were way too big and could be halved.

www.somerfield.co.uk

THANKS TO CALLAGHAN INTERIORS OF TEDDINGTON: 020 8943 4333; WORDS: SUE WEEKES; PICTURES: STEVE ORINO, BBC, KOBAL, RETNA

E-LICIOUS

Meatballs with treacle? Yes!

This site originates from Scandinavia and aims, rather nobly, to improve the quality of family life. Once you've chosen a recipe you can print it out, email it to a friend, add it to your menu plan or place it on your shopping list. There are useful instructional video clips which show you how to do common tasks such as fillet a salmon. E-licious will be making a service available for WAP phones later this year.

We chose the following meatballs recipe from the site's recommended daily suggestions, which, we will testify, really do change every day.

CREOLE STYLE MEATBALLS

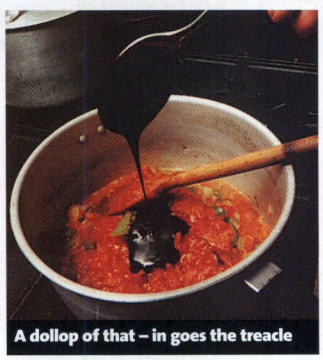
1 onion chopped
600g minced beef
1 egg, beaten
3 tbs plain flour
0.25 tsp cayenne pepper
0.25 tsp paprika, ground
Salt, pepper
2 tbs olive oil for frying
1 tbs olive oil for the sauce
1 green bell pepper, chopped for the sauce
1 red bell pepper chopped for the sauce
2 garlic cloves crushed for the sauce
2 celery stalks chopped for the sauce
400g chopped tomatoes, canned for the sauce
1 bay leaf for the sauce
1 tsp cayenne pepper for the sauce
1 tsp paprika ground for the sauce
1 tsp treacle for the sauce

Utensils: knife, garlic press, measuring utensils, bowl, fork, saucepan, frying pan, wooden spoon, cutting board.

METHOD

■ 1 Place the minced beef in a bowl with half the chopped onion.
■ 2 Add the egg, flour, cayenne, paprika, salt and pepper. Mix together until they are thoroughly combined.
■ 3 To make the sauce, start by heating the oil in the saucepan and frying the last of the onion and the peppers.
■ 4 Add the garlic and celery, stir and cook for two minutes. Next add the tomatoes and their juice, the bay leaf, cayenne, paprika, molasses and 100ml of water.
■ 5 Bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes uncovered. The sauce should start to get thick and the vegetables still remain a little crunchy.
■ 6 While the sauce is simmering, heat the oil in a frying pan and prepare the meatballs.
■ 7 With wet hands shape the meat into 16 golf ball-size shapes.
■ 8 Put them into the hot oil and fry them over a high heat, until they are well browned.

Shallow-fried balls – a preferred option



A dollop of that – in goes the treacle

■ 9 Season with salt and pepper and serve with the sauce. Accompany the dish with some steaming hot rice if desired.
SERVES 4

PREP AND COOKING

All ingredients were simple and readily available. Kenneth only questioned the inclusion of treacle because, as it's used so little these days, if you buy a tin you're unlikely to use it for much else.

The recipe is easy to follow but it demanded a fair amount of preparation time – 35 minutes – which we didn't see mentioned anywhere on the recipe. Mikhail felt that it being a Creole recipe, the lack of Tabasco was an oversight – so put a few drops in. The only other criticism was that our experts would have added more liquid to the sauce. Kenneth opted for pan-frying rather than deep-frying out of personal preference.

DID IT TASTE GOOD?

Yes – a resounding thumbs up at the table. The recipe said 'serves four', and it fed five of us with about half a dozen meatballs to spare at the end. Mind you, we did have to leave room for a second main course and two puddings. It was nice and peppy – although afterwards we remembered that this was partly due to the fact that we put in double the paprika because the photographer missed the 'money' shot first time round.

'We did doctor it a bit,' said Mikhail, 'but it's turned out OK and it would form a nice family meal with some rice.'

'I'd have done it a bit differently,' said Kenneth, 'and it needed slightly more cooking time than the recipe... and I'd have liked more liquid. Apart from that, it's come out well.'

www.e-licious.co.uk

ONLINE RECIPES

Delia's 'at home incognito' days

food_drink/recipes/recipesfs.htm is altogether more indulgent, with recipes and advice from Raymond Blanc and a searchable database of contributions from its glorious *Food Illustrated* magazine.

While British sites are on the increase, there are some awesome American recipe databases that make useful bookmarks. SOAR, the Searchable Online Archive of Recipes at ***soar.berkeley.edu/recipes***, may be dreadfully designed but offers over 65,000 recipes from around the world with ingredients as diverse as fresh blubber to a Klingon's ear (the latter's a joke; the first one's for real). You can even cook yourself up a nice parrot pie for supper – or how about some Cossack chicken and mushrooms from the Ukraine?

'It's the bird or you, son'

Still hungry? Then you'll find more inspiration at ***www.allrecipes.com***, which has an encyclopaedia that also tells you how to pronounce dishes. Elsewhere, the curiously named Eyeball Potion was one of the most popular recipes at ***www.e-cuisines.com***, where you can get a quick calorie check or complete nutritional breakdown on any foodstuff. And if you thought Delia was a media tart, you've obviously never heard of Betty Crocker ***(www.bettycrocker.com)***, whose radio broadcasts and newspaper columns are legendary in the US. Listening to her in Real Audio is probably more than you can stomach... but her recipe database is huge.

Mrs Osmond, mother of the singing brothers, knew how to feed growing lads – as a quick look at how little Jimmy turned out will testify – and at ***www.osmond.com*** you will be able to download her recipes.

Finally, just to prove that our American cousins don't spend their lives snacking on junk food, ***food.epicurious.com*** is a gourmet's delight where you wouldn't be surprised to bump into those TV shrinks-cum-foodies Frasier and Niles in the chatrooms. Causing a sensation when we visited was the pan-seared tuna with ginger shitake cream sauce recipe. And impress friends with

BBC FOOD

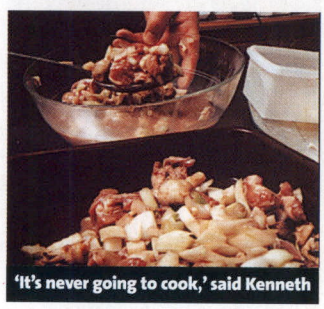
Would early fears about the lamb's inedibleness be unfounded?

The BBC has brought all its cooking expertise, celebrity chefs and recipes under one site. The recipes are contributed from a mixture of the chefs, food associations and Joe Public (yes, you can post a recipe for consideration). This was a suggested dish of the day and was sourced from the Meat and Livestock Commission.

LAMB, FENNEL & MUSHROOM CASSEROLE

PREPARATION TIME Less than 10 mins
COOKING TIME 1 to 2 hrs

Ingredients 450g/1lb lamb, cubed (cubes could be from scrag, middle neck, shoulder, breast or leg)
1 onion, cut into chunks
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
150g/5oz wild or button mushrooms
1 fennel, cut into wedges
30ml/2tbsp redcurrant jelly
150ml/¼ pint red wine
450ml/¾ pint stock



'It's never going to cook,' said Kenneth

170g/6oz garlic bread, sliced (shop bought or home made)

METHOD

■ 1 Preheat oven to 190C/375F/Gas 5.
■ 2 In a large casserole dish, place all of the ingredients – except the garlic bread.
■ 3 Mix well, cover and place in a oven for 1½ to two hours until the meat is tender (thicken if necessary).
■ 4 Remove the casserole lid and arrange garlic bread slices on top. Return to oven for a further 15 minutes.

Accompaniments: serve with mashed potato and steamed cabbage.
SERVES 2

PREP AND COOKING

After some minor irritation over not being able to buy 450g (1lb) lamb pre-wrapped or find some wild mushrooms (at Sainsbury's this time), Kenneth started preparing the dish – but expressed concern that it wasn't going to cook in time. 'I can't believe it doesn't tell you to sweat the onions.' His fears were echoed by Mikhail: 'With lamb and wild mushrooms, this is an expensive experiment if it doesn't work.' And both recoiled in horror that there was no seasoning to be seen anywhere in the recipe. There also appeared to be too much liquid and Kenneth predicted the cooking time wasn't long enough to reduce it.

DID IT TASTE GOOD?

'I don't think it's going to be edible,' says Kenneth. And he was right. The lamb needed more braising and the onions were only half-cooked. A real shame since the casserole juice was actually delicious – even though, as Kenneth predicted, it didn't reduce sufficiently. 'Dish of the day? You couldn't *do* this in a day!' exclaimed Kenneth, 'You need to marinade it overnight for a start.' 'It's got potential,' says Mikhail, 'It just hasn't been realised here.'

www.bbc.co.uk/food

Whatever music's on your mind you'll find it at dotmusic

At the UK's biggest music web site you'll find 14 chart rundowns covering everything from rock to dance to indie, regular music news updates, reviews, and all the latest sound bites and video clips. Click onto dotmusic, it'll take you to a new dimension.

dotmusic
what's your sound?

recipes from famous restaurants – download some goodies here, such as the Hawaii Ritz-Carlton's recipe for Paniolo rack of lamb.

Whatever the origin of your favourite food, most search engines will be able to seek out a site to satisfy it. If you want to do the entire continent of Asia in one easy hit, go to ***www.asiarecipe.com***, where you can click on a country for its recipes. We thought we'd see what tempting treats Turkmenistan could throw up: it delivered on the main course front with 'Plov', although it did struggle with pudding. If Chinese is your fave, then Stuart's Chinese Page at ***www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/~blairsa/current.html*** is commendable, while ***uk.chopstix.net*** will email you a virtual fortune cookie and new recipes everyday.

Lovers of Iranian cuisine are indebted to Roxana and Farzin who, at ***www.ee.surrey.ac.uk/Personal/F.Mokhtarian/recipes***, welcome you to 'the largest collection of Iranian/Persian recipes on the Internet'. Another dynamic duo, from Sweden (if that isn't an oxymoron), have done a similar service for their nation at ***www.santesson.com/recept/swelist.htm***. Anne and Johan have put together a collection of Swedish recipes, even though they say that: 'Many of the traditional Swedish dishes are in our opinion often bordering on the inedible.'

You'll find an altogether more down-to-earth set of recipes at Chow Down Down Under, where Linda guarantees true 'Aussie tucker' from her recipes at ***members.tripod.com/~damsel2_2/ChowDown.html***. It was all quite appetising... until we got to Balmain bugs with mango sauce.

And that's all for now. Still sticking with Pot Noodle? Then there's no hope for you!

Our thanks to the Wine and Food Academy for their help with this article. You can find out more about its courses at ***www.winefoodacademy.com*** *where readers of* the net *can obtain a 10 percent discount off its forthcoming wine-tasting trip to Burgundy.*

SAINSBURY'S

Could its bread and butter pudding really make life taste that little bit better?

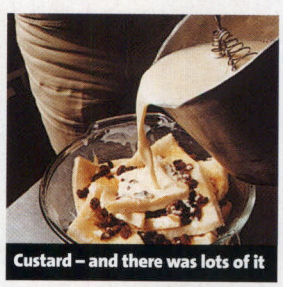
Informative and good-looking site, which offers plenty of inspiration for all budgets. The bread and butter pudding recipe by Phillippa Hammond was a suggested dessert on the home page.

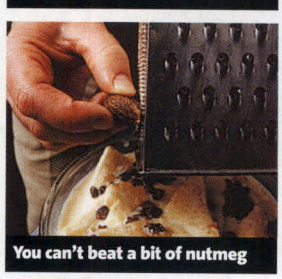
BREAD & BUTTER PUDDING

PREPARATION TIME
15 minutes plus 30 minutes standing time
COOKING TIME 1 hour

INGREDIENTS

600ml (1 pint) semi-skimmed milk
284ml carton double cream
4 medium eggs
4 medium egg yolks
125g (4oz) unrefined golden caster sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
8 slices medium sliced white bread, crusts removed, cut into triangles
50g (2oz) sultanas


Custard – and there was lots of it


You can't beat a bit of nutmeg

50g (2oz) unsalted butter, melted
4 tablespoons Sainsbury's lemon and lime marmalade

METHOD

■ 1 Preheat oven to 190C, 375F, Gas Mark 5.

■ 2 Pour the milk and cream into a pan. Bring to scalding point over a moderate heat.

■ 3 Blend the eggs, yolks and sugar in a bowl and pour over the scalded milk and cream. Whisk lightly. Sieve the custard into a jug. Add vanilla extract.

■ 4 Lay four triangles of bread into the bottom of an 18cm x 18cm ovenproof dish. Scatter over half the sultanas, lay on the remaining bread triangles and the rest of the sultanas. Pour over the custard and place in the fridge for 30 minutes.

■ 5 Place the dish in a roasting tin. Pour hot water into the tin to come halfway up the sides of the dish. Bake the pudding for an hour until golden brown.

SERVES 6

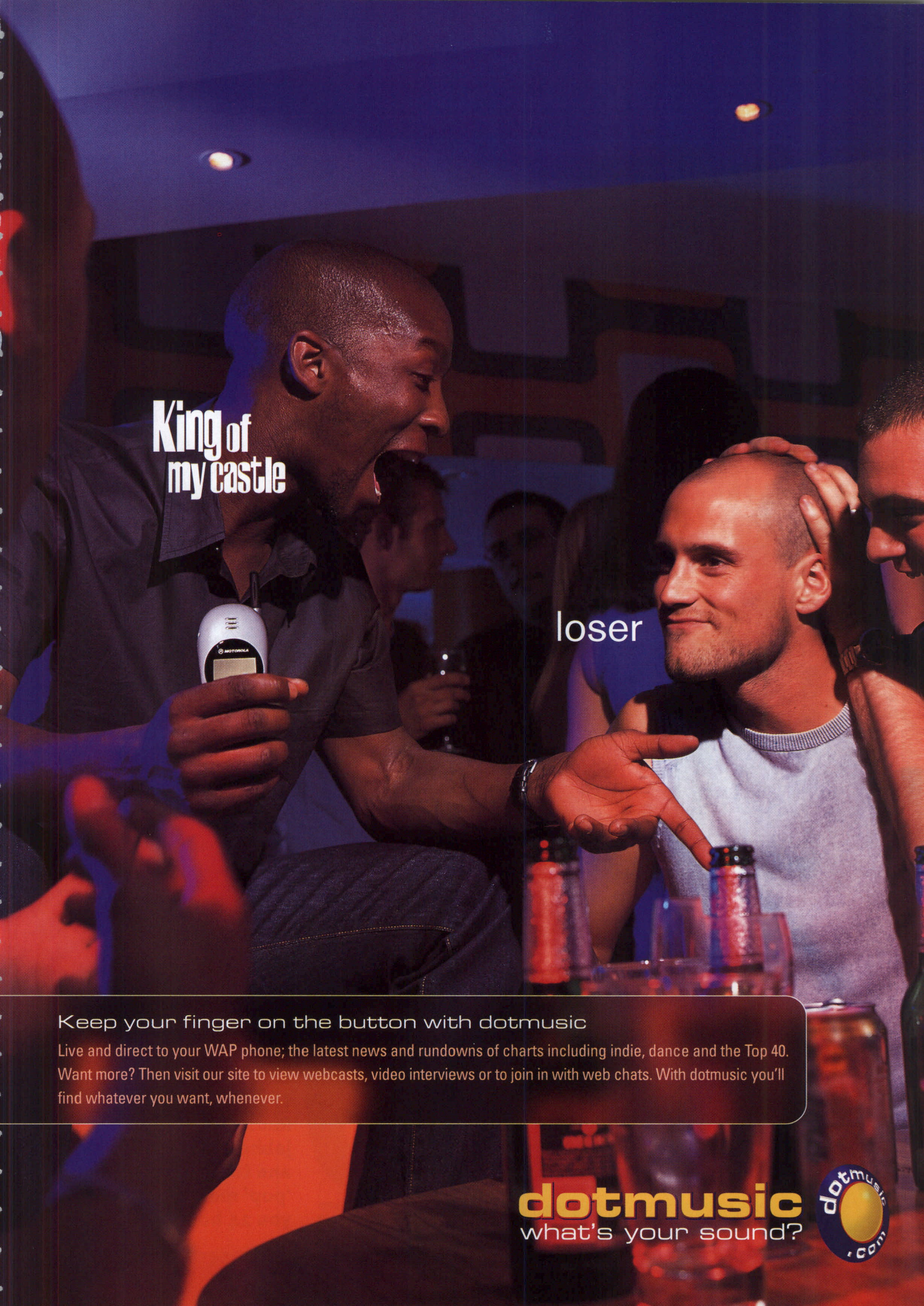
PREP AND COOKING

Mikhail moaned about making homemade custard but, as the results prove, it was well worth it. The recipe was easy to follow, although it omitted to tell you to spread the butter and marmalade on the bread – a heinous crime in Mikhail's book. 'You can't assume people would know that they had to do that,' he said. The other criticism was that there was far too much custard, so Mikhail took corrective measures and held some back. He also added nutmeg, which he felt was another omission in the recipe.

DID IT TASTE GOOD?

Yes, a stunner, best summed up by Kenneth: 'Mossiman's known for his bread and butter pud. This one's better than his.'

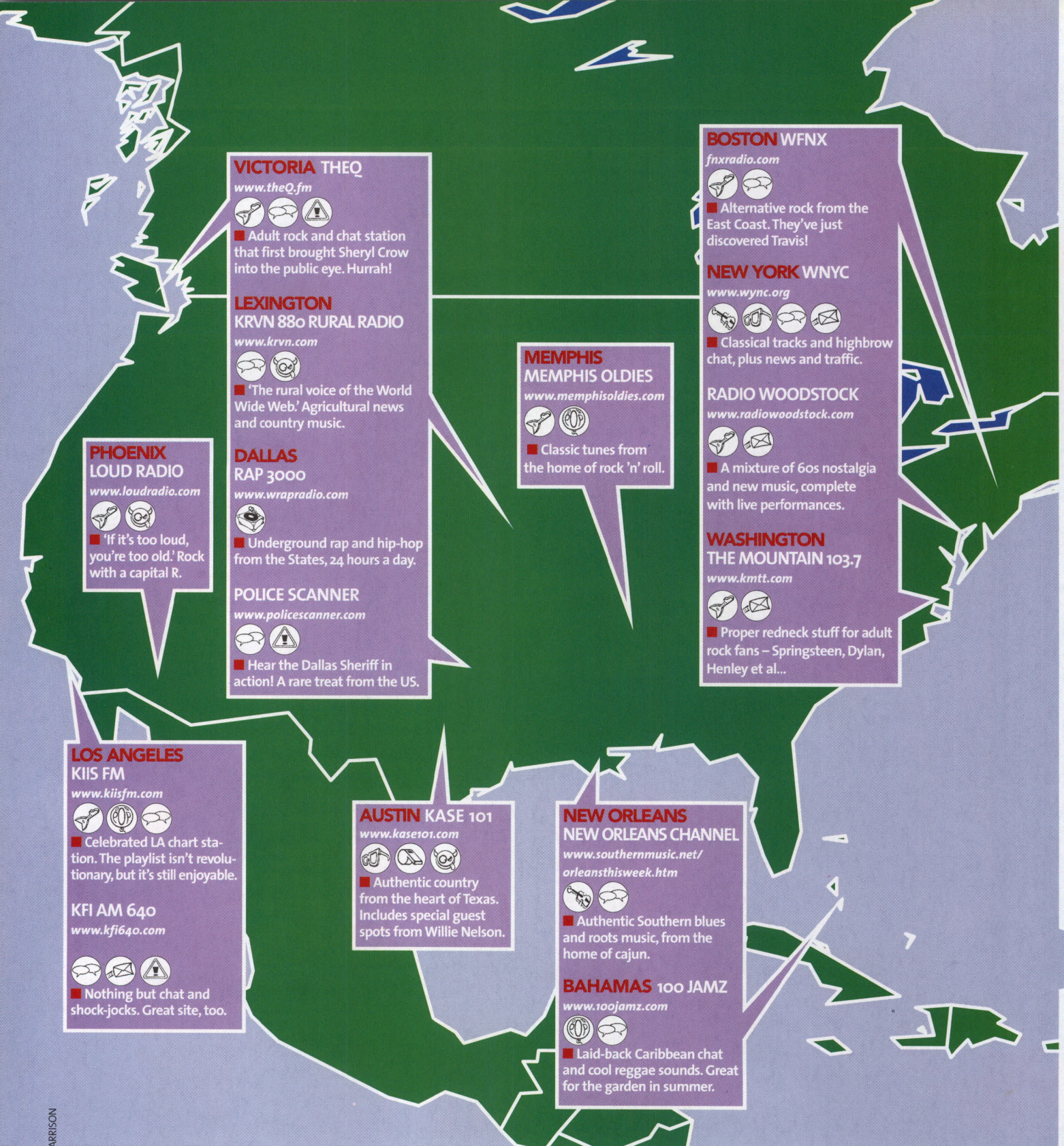
www.sainsburys.co.uk



Keep your finger on the button with dotmusic

Live and direct to your WAP phone; the latest news and rundowns of charts including indie, dance and the Top 40. Want more? Then visit our site to view webcasts, video interviews or to join in with web chats. With dotmusic you'll find whatever you want, whenever.

dotmusic
what's your sound?



VICTORIA THEQ
www.theQ.fm

■ Adult rock and chat station that first brought Sheryl Crow into the public eye. Hurrah!

LEXINGTON
KRVN 880 RURAL RADIO
www.krvn.com

■ 'The rural voice of the World Wide Web.' Agricultural news and country music.

DALLAS
RAP 3000
www.wrapradio.com

■ Underground rap and hip-hop from the States, 24 hours a day.

POLICE SCANNER
www.policescanner.com

■ Hear the Dallas Sheriff in action! A rare treat from the US.

BOSTON WFNX
fnxradio.com

■ Alternative rock from the East Coast. They've just discovered Travis!

NEW YORK WNYC
www.wync.org

■ Classical tracks and highbrow chat, plus news and traffic.

RADIO WOODSTOCK
www.radiowoodstock.com

■ A mixture of 60s nostalgia and new music, complete with live performances.

WASHINGTON
THE MOUNTAIN 103.7
www.kmtt.com

■ Proper redneck stuff for adult rock fans – Springsteen, Dylan, Henley et al...

MEMPHIS
MEMPHIS OLDIES
www.memphisoldies.com

■ Classic tunes from the home of rock 'n' roll.

PHOENIX
LOUD RADIO
www.loudradio.com

■ 'If it's too loud, you're too old.' Rock with a capital R.

LOS ANGELES
KIIS FM
www.kiisfm.com

■ Celebrated LA chart station. The playlist isn't revolutionary, but it's still enjoyable.

KFI AM 640
www.kfi640.com

■ Nothing but chat and shock-jocks. Great site, too.

AUSTIN KASE 101
www.kase101.com

■ Authentic country from the heart of Texas. Includes special guest spots from Willie Nelson.

NEW ORLEANS
NEW ORLEANS CHANNEL
www.southernmusic.net/orleansthisweek.htm

■ Authentic Southern blues and roots music, from the home of cajun.

BAHAMAS 100 JAMZ
www.100jamz.com

■ Laid-back Caribbean chat and cool reggae sounds. Great for the garden in summer.

9000 STATIONS AND COUNTING

Who needs an aerial as tall as the Eiffel Tower to pick up Moscow? Thanks to Internet Radio, the monkey-like jabbering of foreigners and their excruciating 'pop' music can be with you 24 hours a day!

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; ILLUSTRATIONS: ALAN ELDRIDGE, STUART HARRISON

DUBLIN XFM
www.isis.ie/xfm
■ Alternative music from the heart of Ireland. Watch the action in RealVideo, too

VATICAN CITY
VATICAN RADIO
www.vatican.va/news_services/radio/multimedia/live_en.html
■ The only station in the world which counts the Pope as a DJ. Sort of.

MOSCOW
THE VOICE OF RUSSIA
www.vor.ru/index_eng.html
■ Regular news from the former Commies. Plenty to read on the site, too.

MUNICH
RADIO PIONEER
www.radiopioneer.com
■ 'Melodic rock' from Munich. Which means The Scorpions, basically.

BEIJING
CHINA RADIO INTERNATIONAL
www.cri.com.cn/english
■ Check out the sounds they're rocking to in Beijing, or listen to news and documentary programming.

HONG KONG
RTHK *www.rthk.org.hk*
■ Laid-back classical music, with talk and news too.

2 CAIRO
EGYPT GOVERNMENT INFORMATION SERVICE
www.sis.gov.eg
■ State-sanctioned news from the land of the Pyramids.

3 JO'BURG SAFM
www.safm.co.za
■ News and documentaries from South Africa.

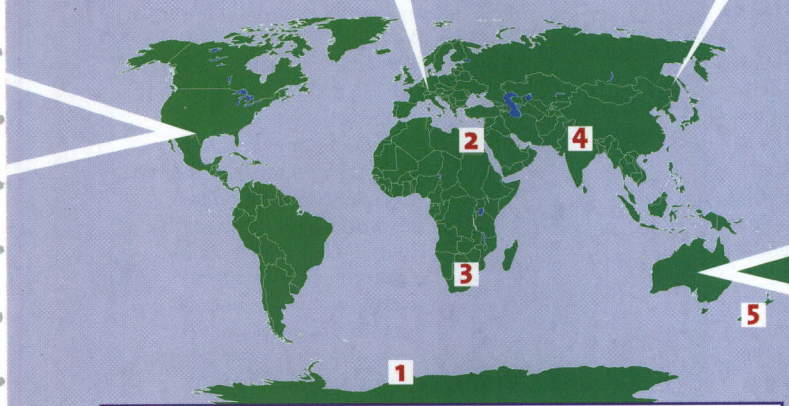
4 NEPAL RADIO NEPAL
www.catmando.com/news/radio-nepal
■ A wide range of music, drama and news, plus background info on Nepalese issues.

1 ANTARCTICA
ANETSTATION
www.anetstation.com
■ Contemporary jazz and blues from the middle of nowhere, plus some strange chat.

5 AUCKLAND 95BFM
www.95bfm.co.nz
■ Healthy mix of shock jocks and topical chat with an alternative soundtrack.

WHAT DOES IT ALL MEAN?

DANCE	CHAT
ROCK	SPORT
POP	INTERACTIVE
CLASSICAL	WEIRD
NEWS	ADULT



BRISBANE 4ZZZ
www.4zzzfm.org.au
■ A frankly alarming dose of obscure alternative music and shouty antics.

ADELAIDE
FRESH FM
www.fresh.fm.net.au
■ Pumping dance tunes from Down Under with a refreshingly underground vibe.

SYDNEY 873 2GB
2gb.com
■ Tame news and chat from the heart of Oz. Great for sport.

MELBOURNE
RADIO AUSTRALIA
www.abc.net.au/ra
■ Serious news and chat in a variety of languages – including 'English'.

THE WORLD. IT'S A BIG PLACE. Chances are you couldn't walk it. Well, not in a day anyway. The Web, however, has made it possible for the other side of Earth to be as close as the chippy on the corner.

Net radio brings us sounds from far-off stations – 9000 of them! We've brought together a couple of dozen of the best broadcasters on these pages. Why wake up to the UK Top 40 when you could be hearing the latest sounds from LA?

You don't need to be a boffin to pick up these stations; to tune in, you just need a simple piece of software (the major players are listed on page 57). You can either stream the sounds live onto your desktop or download a small player which sits on your hard disk and directs sounds to your PC.

Most stations have archived shows, too, meaning that breakfast Stateside needn't be midnight over here. So what's keeping you?

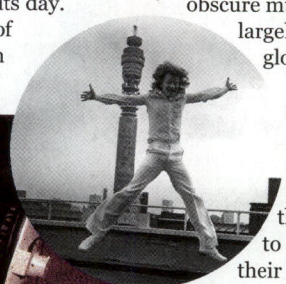
'This one's going out to everyone on B-Ward...'

MAKE WAY FOR THE E-JAYS!

Is traditional radio about to spin its last disc? Yes, if ex-Radio 1 DJ Bruno Brookes can help it

'THE FUTURE HAS NO FREQUENCY,' boasts the homepage of stormlive.com, the Internet's newest radio station. While such a claim might be premature at a time when even the most hardened surfer listens online only sporadically, there's evidence to suggest that traditional radio has had its day.

Internet radio (the process of piping speech and music down a phone line) never really promised much initially. With limited bandwidth and even more restricted interest, it was the exclusive domain of the 'ham' fraternity, who foisted their obsessive rantings and obscure musical tastes onto a largely disinterested global public.



The genre was saved by expats' desire to hear their favourite stations no matter where they were. The Web allowed exiles to tune in to news and music from their home countries (and in the case of the World Service, to access an official news source they may not previously have been able to hear). By 1998, most major stations were streaming their programmes in RealAudio, with considerable success: soon, Net-only stations were springing up, rivalling traditional outfits by offering more online-specific content. Around 13 percent of Net users have now listened to radio online – not a huge number, but it's growing steadily as access and quality improves.

Stormlive is the latest development in the radio race. The brainchild of former Radio 1 favourite Bruno Brookes, the Web-only station started life as a Freeserve channel in May, and is hoping to record listener figures of around half-a-million in its first month.

Storm's initial success is testament to its ambition: celebrity 'e-jays' like Joe Absolom (aka Matthew from *EastEnders*), Lara Croft lookalike Nell McAndrew and model-turned-presenter Jo Guest head a line-up of chat and music tailored for work-place listeners or Net fanatics.

Storm is selling itself on interaction: e-jays respond to emails live on air and point people to popular Web sites during the course of shows. Eventually, it hopes to become

'I can listen to a station in LA, sure, but it's aimed at people in LA'

the biggest Net station in the world, says Brookes: 'We didn't think there were any real voices on the Web. I can listen to a station in LA, sure, but it's aimed at people in LA and not at me on the Web. We've married the Internet to traditional radio standards and created the best of both worlds. We're not competing with the FM audience, because nobody else can do quite what we do.'

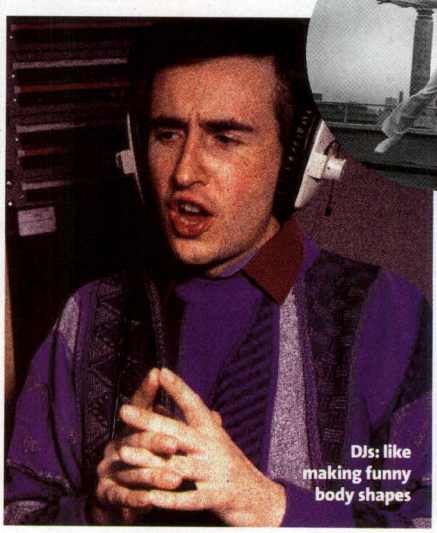
Slowly but surely, an audience is being created: while Storm represents a direct challenge to the Radio 1s of this world, the real strength of Net radio lies in its potential for diversity. With only a relatively small number of terrestrial licences granted, those with more eclectic musical tastes or cultural concerns are often left frustrated by the choice on offer; with Web radio, the possibilities appear to be limitless. No licence is needed, and setting up is relatively simple. 'Thanks to Net radio there could be 10 different DJs playing an independent record instead of no-one hearing it,' says DJ Carl Cox.

Traditional stations will quickly realise the need to avoid the fragmentation of their audience by introducing Web-only programming of their own. Within a couple of years, industry analysts predict, the office radio will be a thing of the past – every employee will be streaming their own station from their own desktop. Maybe the future doesn't have a frequency after all.

HEAR THIS
THE WOMB

www.thewomb.com

Miami is one of the world's dance music capitals, so it's no surprise that dance's most prolific Web station is based there: The Womb's pretentious 'global collective' rhetoric might seem off-putting, but the banging tunes it spins 24 hours a day will satisfy house and garage fans longing for their favourite sounds at work.



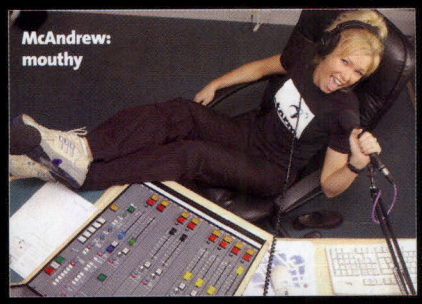
DJs: like making funny body shapes

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; PICTURES: BBC, CELEBRITY.CO.UK, PA; ILLUSTRATIONS: ALAN ELDRIDGE

Q&A

NELL McANDREW

Nell McAndrew shot to fame as the real-life face of *Tomb Raider* heroine Lara Croft before going on to forge a career in television, presenting Channel 5's *It's A Knockout*. She recently took her first steps onto the Net by presenting a slot on Web-only radio station Stormlive (***www.stormlive.com***). We caught up with her to find out what this 'e-jaying' lark is all about...



McAndrew: mouthy

How did you first get interested in the Internet and what do you use it for?
While I was pretending to be the real-life Lara Croft, I'd heard there were loads of sites about me and I wanted to check them out. I use the Net for loads of stuff, but enjoy looking for silly Web sites.

How have you found DJing?
E-jaying you mean! You don't realise how hard it's going to be until you do it. It's very nerve-wracking but exciting at the same time. When that red light goes on, it's like 'what am I going to say?'

Did you get any advice from established DJs before you started?
No; it was pretty immediate after I was asked – two weeks later, there I was, thrown in at the deep end.

Did you had any teething problems initially?
Nothing too bad, actually. Just the normal. I've realised the more prepared you are before the programme, the better it is.

What sort of things can we expect to hear on your show?
All sorts of music – weird Web sites, requests, loads of emails and my Cyberdiary, where you get to find out what I do all week.

Do you see e-jaying as a potential new career?
I love doing it – I can do the show and not give up anything else. I'm 26 now and want to keep my options open, so the more things I can do, the better.

'Net radio could take over because it's interactive and you're online worldwide'

What do you think about the concept of Net radio? Will it take over from traditional radio?
I hope it will. It's new and exciting and it could possibly take over from terrestrial radio because it's so interactive and you're online worldwide.

Have you got any other favourite stations?
Magic – when you're stuck in London traffic, it keeps you sane.

What else are you up to at the moment, and what are your plans for the immediate future?
E-jaying on Storm. And I'm the face and body of Triumph lingerie, I start filming *It's A Knockout* in July and I've just taken up singing lessons, so watch this space.

Nell McAndrew presents the Cyber Storm show on stormlive.com on Wednesdays, between 5pm and 8pm.

stormlive.com

powered by freeserve
www.freeserve.com

www.freeserve.com/fsradio

the world's **biggest** Internet only radio station

the Storm is breaking!

In May 2000 Stormlive swept onto the Internet, delivering instant live interactive radio to the massive Freeserve audience. E-casting LIVE entertainment and music 24 hours a day, SEVEN days a week, Stormlive has already reached over half a million listeners. The Stormlive audience is growing by TENS of THOUSANDS each week.

The unrivalled mix of Celebrity Ejayz like Jo Guest, Nell McAndrew, Spike from 911 and Joe Absolom make Stormlive complusive listening for the valuable 15 - 34 year old Freeserve audience.

Stormlive takes Radio, the UK's fastest growing advertising medium and embraces the Internet, the UK's fastest growing interactive medium.

storm LIVE

For more information on how to advertise on the world's biggest Internet radio station, call the world's No.1 stream team at:

Radio Advertising - AH media Adam Verby
adamverby@ahmedia.co.uk T: 020 7734 4735

Freeserve Advertising Banners - James Barnicott
james.barnicott@freeserve.com T: 020 7553 4867

PR & Promotions Director - James Macdonald
james@stormlive.com T: 020 7529 5444

Creative Director - Ric Blaxill
ric@stormlive.com T: 020 7529 5444

Station Director - Andy Thompson
andy@stormlive.com T: 01635 572 800

Managing Director - Bruno Brookes
bruno@stormlive.com T: 01635 572 800

Storm Live Ejayz include:

Joe Absolom

Jo Guest

Nell McAndrew

Spike (Ex 911)

the future has no frequency

Stormlive delivery partners: powered by freeserve www.freeserve.com COMPAQ bsq webgenerics

www.freeserve.com/fsradio

BEST OF BRITISH

UK stations have woken up to the Web's potential

TRUST CHRIS EVANS TO COME UP trumps again. When the ginger-haired media mogul took Virgin Radio off Richard Branson's hands last year, he got not only a thriving station but also bought his way into one of the Internet's biggest success stories.

Virgin has used the Web to extend its appeal far beyond these shores – in fact, it's the world's number one Net station, with a whopping 200,000 listeners a month logging on for Evans and co's mix of MOR and chat.

Virginradio.com's audience is largely in the States, where surfers enjoy hearing the latest British hits before they cross the Atlantic. Heavy promotion of the site since its 1996 launch and investment in extra features has also paid off – among the most popular extras is the GIMP (Ginger Interactive Media Player), which gives extra info on each track playing, including an e-commerce option which lets you buy the CD as you listen to it. Future plans include a WAP service allowing radio on the move, says online director John Ousby. 'There's going to be a move away from the PC and we're anticipating that.'

The Virgin site is heavy on interactivity, with competitions, artist profiles and charts, but their efforts have been eclipsed by the revamped Radio 1 site (***www.bbc.co.uk/radio1***), which has been drawing gasps of admiration in Web circles for its sheer depth of content. With Webcams from every show, DJ profiles, news and sections for pop, alternative and club sounds, it's quickly become essential surfing.

Radio 1's site has quickly become essential surfing

The makeover was a miracle

The Beeb has been busy elsewhere. The Radio 2 (***www.bbc.co.uk/radio2***) and Radio 4 (***www.bbc.co.uk/radio4***) sites feature listings and special micro-sites for specific shows. At Radio 3 (***www.bbc.co.uk/radio3***), there's a database of classical reviews, while Radio 5 (***www.bbc.co.uk/radio5***) has sport and news feeds plus the quite fantastic Church Hall (***www.bbc.co.uk/churchhall***), in which increasingly barking correspondent Stuart Hall spouts forth on footballing.

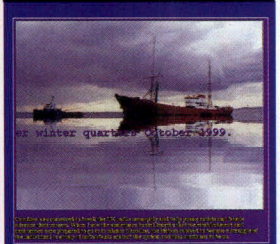
It's not just the big stations who excel online. National sports network TalkSport (***www.talksport.net***) boasts an excellent Web presence, with a news feed, columnists and an audio archive of famous football moments. Classic FM (***www.classicfm.com***) has a CD shop, classical trivia and a concert guide, while JazzFM (***www.jazzfm.co.uk***) has even branched out into art with an online gallery of paintings.

Whatever your taste, you're sure to find the streams and the sites to suit you: from the jaunty pop of London's Capital Radio (***www.capitalfm.com***) through the alternative sounds of XFM (***www.xfm.co.uk***) to the sickeningly twee MOR of Heart (***www.heartfm.co.uk***). News Direct (***www.newsdirect.co.uk***) has a 24-hour news service, and listings of local news stations is at ***www.radionow.co.uk***.

And who knows, some of the Net-only broadcasters might make it onto the airwaves. The coming of digital radio will mean plenty of slots for new stations – and who better to fill them than Internet DJs? Digital radio receivers are expensive at the moment, but are bound to come down in price. See ***ukdigitalradio.com*** for details of the kit and the stations you can already hear.

Sara Cox: streaming onto your desktop

HEAR THIS
RADIO CAROLINE



www.radiocaroline.co.uk
Thought the famed pirate radio station – broadcast from a ship off the UK coastline – had spun her final disk? Wrong. Caroline lives on through the Web, where she commenced transmission in April. Another example of the Net in action.

'GOOD MORNING SKELMERSDALE!'

Want to set up as a bedroom DJ? The Net makes it easier than ever before...

IN A SMALL COTTAGE IN A REMOTE Yorkshire village beats the pulsing heart of the world's biggest opera radio station. However, you won't have tuned into an aria on OperadiO while cruising into work on a Monday morning, because it doesn't broadcast in any traditional format – but 15,000 listeners across the globe are enjoying the station's sounds every day.

DJs: sticky

OperadiO.com's success shows, on a relatively small scale, just how powerful Web radio can be for capturing a niche market. Since January, over 80,000 different opera buffs have visited the site, figures that could never have been achieved by transmitting in a single geographic area and already more than enough to dominate the market.

The station's HQ is a marked contrast to the hi-tech studios most traditional outfits require to get off the ground – all OperadiO needs is a few PCs, sound equipment and CDs. Its servers are hosted by broadcast.com in Dallas, taking away the storage space and technical know-how necessary to accommodate multiple downloads.

The highway to radio happiness, however, is dotted with the potholes of failure. Despite OperadiO's modest ambitions, the CEO and co-founder David Craig estimates the start-up cost at around £200,000, money he has been unable to recoup through site advertising – on-air ads or subscription fees may be an inevitable next step.

And, despite the fact that the station is able to reach every opera fan in the world, convincing them to listen to Net radio has been a problem: 'We've stood outside the Royal Opera House in Covent Garden and asked people "do you use the Internet?" and the results prove we've got a long way to go. It's very difficult to imagine them coming out of the Opera House in a year's time and downloading our player.'

A number of Net stations, however, have

HEAR THIS
SPIKE RADIO

www.spikeradio.com

One for the kids, this. Australian station Spike serves up a tasty platter of leftfield tunes, including indie, industrial and dance, without the incessant chatter that comes with Radio 1. It also offers an interactive magazine plus interviews and sessions from artists.

THE DESKTOP JUKEBOX

Re-inventing the radio...

ONE OF THE MAJOR PROBLEMS with Internet radio is its inherent unsexiness. Tuning in on a clunking great PC isn't anywhere near as enticing a prospect as fiddling with a traditional wireless. But all that's about to change with the ultra-sleek Kerbango, the first stand-alone Web radio.

Kerbango (*www.kerbango.com*) takes the principles of an ordinary radio and applies them to the Web. Simply plugging it into a phone line and connecting to the Web brings you a full listing of listenable stations, which update every time you log on to include the latest broadcasts. All the functions you'd expect in a normal radio – handy volume control, graphic equaliser, headphone switch, clock and alarm – are present and correct.

The real beauty of the Kerbango, however, is its interactivity; if the station is compatible with the system, it'll display the name of the artist and track you're listening to, before linking you to a shop where you can buy it. Oh, and it also doubles as an MP3 player if you plug it into your hard drive. The Kerbango hits these shores later in the year, and is expected to retail at under $300 (around £200).

happier tales to tell. Dance broadcaster ***www.ukfm.net*** has enjoyed a cult following with its playlist of new underground sounds, ***www.studentradio.co.uk*** unites universities across Britain, while newly-launched Richard Branson venture ***www.radiofree virgin.com*** offers a dozen different channels for different musical genres. On a smaller scale, Supanova (***www.supanovaradio.co.uk***) has captured an audience of around 3,000 listeners a week playing 'psychedelic and pagan' music; the station started life as an FM venture in Southend, but transferred to the Web to air more diverse sounds.

If your ambitions are modest, getting started is easy. A computer with a sound card is sufficient to start transmitting, and CDs can easily be transferred to hard drives for broadcasting, provided you have an ISP with sufficient bandwidth to allow multiple downloads. If you intend to include music in your broadcasts, however, you'll need to consult the Mechanical Copyright Protection Society and the Performing Rights Society over copyright and fees – the latest hits come at a cost.

The easier alternative, of course, is to allow someone else to take all the technical worries away from you. Live365 (***www.live365.com***) is one of the largest radio communities, allowing users to create and stream their own stations by storing music with 365 and uploading it as and when they need it. Hundreds of people have taken up the challenge already, with the simplicity of the system the major attraction. And maybe, just maybe, the next Howard Stern (or, indeed, the next Dave Lee Travis) is busy broadcasting away somewhere in the bowels of the site's archives.

Allow someone else to take the technical worries

MORE TOP NET STATIONS:

- ***www.3wk.com*** – *Winsome indiepop hits from downtown Missouri.*
- ***www.groovetech.com*** – *Popular dance sounds from the States.*
- ***www.ministryofsound.com*** – *Hear the latest happenings from the London superclub.*
- ***www.44k.com*** – *Dublin dance station with a considerable cult following.*

'...and to my surprise it turned out to be a ladyboy'

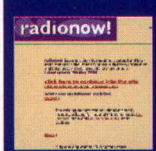
'Chief, we've got Richard on line two who's got a problem with loggers'

SITES FOR SOUNDS

The URLs you need to enjoy Net radio to the full

SPINNER
www.spinner.com
Over 120 different music channels, programmed by experts. It says here.

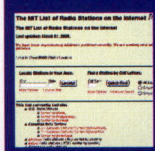
SONICNET
radio.sonicnet.com
Create your own radio station, or listen to other amateur efforts.



RADIO NOW
www.radionow.co.uk
Fantastic interactive map of the UK with links to every radio station.

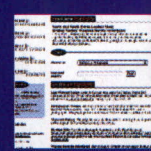
WORLD RADIO NETWORK
www.wrn.org
Collects news and information from far-flung corners of the globe under one roof.

RADIO DIRECTORY
www.radiodirectory.com
Not just a list of stations, but a massive resource for would-be DJs, too.



MIT LIST OF RADIO STATIONS *wmbr.mit.edu/stations/list.html*
Claims to have a 9,000-strong list of Web stations.

LIVE RADIO
www.live-radio.net
Eminently useable, searchable list of Web stations, grouped geographically.



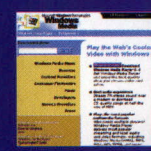
NATIONAL PUBLIC RADIO
www.npr.org
The best place to explore the backwaters of US public service broadcasting.

RADIO 4 ALL
www.radio4all.org
This has a collection of underground and pirate stations online.

REAL GUIDE
realguide.real.com
Broadcast portal that lets you search for RealAudio-enabled sites and stations.

BROADCAST
www.broadcast.com/radio
Host a radio show here, or take a look at some they made earlier.

REAL PLAYER
www.real.com
One of the most popular and accessible downloads for hearing Net radio.



WINDOWS MEDIA PLAYER
www.windowsmediaplayer.com
Microsoft's increasingly essential radio streamer.

WINAMP
www.winamp.com
Media player which also supports MP3. Much favoured by Net types.

Pen £19.99

Not any old pen this, you know. Oh no. It is specially designed for a left-handed person, so that the nib gives the correct angle on paper to ensure a smooth ink flow. ***www.left-handed.co.uk*** makes life – and writing – just a bit better for all you lefties. Orders sent within 48 hours; £2.50 p&p.

Retail therapy

Pride of place this month is the noble stag – looking good on the moor, good in your home

Food from £1.60

A gourmet feast courtesy of ***www.morel.co.uk***, with delicacies such as a game pie, marmalades, extra virgin olive oil – and sardines. Well, the tins are pretty. Goods should be with you within 10 days, at £3.95 p&p.

Beauty products from £3.75

Get your skin beach-friendly with these loofahs and foot massager from ***www.opal-london.com***. Delivery times and costs vary.

Cyber Tool £49.95

Update your tool kit with this funky penknife in a 'jelly' casing. Rather than prying stones out of horses' hooves, use its gadgets to disconnect your hard drive . ***www.victorinox.com***

X-Zylo Ultra £6

Throw further than you've ever thrown before – up to 600 feet – with this rather funky X-Zylo Ultra disc thing. ***www.iwantoneofthose.com*** has them in stock and will post them (or throw them, who knows?) within 24 hours; p&p varies.

Kilt hire £35.95

Moss Bros are purveyors of fine clothing for hire – including Highland wear. The Edinburgh Festival is fast approaching, so annoy the locals by turning up in one of these. ***www.mossbros.co.uk***

Casio MP3 watch £250

All those buttons and dangly bits actually have a purpose for a change – you can download MP3 files, then play them back. Oooh. Free delivery within 24 hours.
www.firebox.com

Deerhead £12.50

Would any home be complete without this magnificent (and 100 percent synthetic) beast? We think not. This could be yours in a week for £4.95 p&p. ***www.kitschensync.com***

Hats £110

James Lock opened for business 300 years ago, and the family's been hand-crafting titfers ever since. Clients include Prince Philip and the Duke of Edinburgh; now scrotes like you and I can buy online from ***www.lockhatters.co.uk***. Delivery times vary, and p&p is £10.

Cricket bat £180

Instead of shouting 'I could do better than that!' as England get beaten in every Test, put your money where your mouth is and invest in a top-notch bat. Head down to ***www.slazenger.com*** for one of these fine bits of willow. Delivery is within 24 hours; p&p varies.

PHOTOGRAPHY: NICK WRIGHT

THE NET'S TOP TIPS FOR ONLINE SHOPPING

Keep to our simple guidelines, and there's no reason why online shopping should end in a puddle of tears

■ **CHECK THE SITE IS SECURE** A small padlock will appear in the bottom left of your browser to show that you can safely send credit card details through the site. Your Web browser will also tell you whether a site is secure or not when you enter it.

■ **SHOP WITH BRAND-NAME COMPANIES** As with any shopping, you're better off with a company you've actually heard of.

■ **CHECK DELIVERY TIMES AND CHARGES** Companies should tell you the delivery charge if there is one on their site. If you live in the Highlands and Islands or Ireland, you may find that free delivery does not apply.

■ **NEVER SEND ANYTHING BY EMAIL** If a site asks for card details by email, don't oblige. It's far, far easier for emails to be intercepted.

■ **PRINT THE CONTRACT** This is the only permanent record of your purchase, so make sure you keep it, along with your order number and other details. Don't forget: if it's a UK site, you have the same consumer rights as you do in the High Street.

■ **IF IT GOES WRONG, DON'T WORRY** Contrary to scare stories, online shopping is safer and very often cheaper than traditional methods – and it's in the online store's interest to sort any problems out quickly.

THE DVD EXPERIENCE
SPONSORED BY

TOTAL DVD

HI-FI ZONE
and Home Entertainment
SPONSORED BY
WHAT HI-FI?

INTELLIGENT HOME
SPONSORED BY
HOMECHOICE
TV YOU CONTROL

ONLINE PAVILION
SPONSORED BY
freeserve
www.freeserve.com
thenet

TELECOMS WORLD
SPONSORED BY
vodafone
WHAT MOBILE

Life
Digital Radio

All the kit can

LIVE 2000 EVENT

AUDIO · DVD · DIGITAL · GAMES · INTERNET · MOBILES

EARLS COURT LONDON
Sept 21-24

Great savings for **thenet** readers
when you book in advance
Call **0870 736 2000** and quote **thenetf**

AOL • ALPINE • BOSE • DOTMUSIC • ERICSSON • IN CARS MAGAZINE

BOOK TICKETS NOW ON 0870
OR JUST TURN UP *(BUT REMEMBER IT'S MORE ON THE DOOR)*

you handle

Get the lowdown on all the latest kit, from DVD to MP3, WAP to MiniDisc, Internet to Home Entertainment.

All the top brands, all the latest products, all in one place.

See them, touch them, hear them, try them at LIVE 2000 Earls Court.

So make it a date.

Kit Live
XXX

LINN/LOEWE • MARANTZ • MOTOROLA • SHARP • SIEMENS • SONY • TECHNICS • YAMAHA

736 2000 www.live2000.com

www.get-your.co.uk

Online Domain Name Registration

includes:

Real-Time Online Setup
Web & Email Forwarding
Optional Holding Webpage
Free Email Autoresponder
Easy web-based administration
Domain Registration fees

2nd year free

www.get-your.co.uk

WebFusion™
Part of the WebFusion Group

WEBFUSION WELCOME

Surf to OR CALL **0115 9170000**

what website?

August 2000

YOUR MONTHLY GUIDE TO THE NUDEST, NEWEST SITES ON THE NET

TAKE ME TO YOUR LEADER

SHOW ME THE SITES...

What Website?

AUGUST

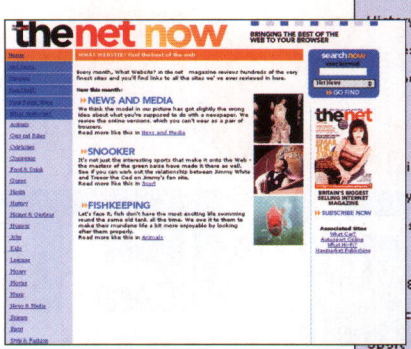
thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Since it will undoubtedly be peeing down as you read this (it *is* summer after all), we have our choice picks of the new releases to keep you occupied of an evening – plus our guide to the best online sales sites for DVDs and videos. Details in What Website...

www.thenetnow.co.uk

EVERY LINK ON ONE GREAT SITE!

God forbid you should expend too much energy in the quest of a Web site. So, to ensure against this happening, we kind souls have made it possible to simply type in one address – ***www.thenetnow.co.uk*** – and link up with the sites!



THE FREE SOFTWARE STARTER PACK

THE ULTIMATE HELP BUTTON ***www.thenetnow.co.uk*** All the essential free software reviewed and rated with links

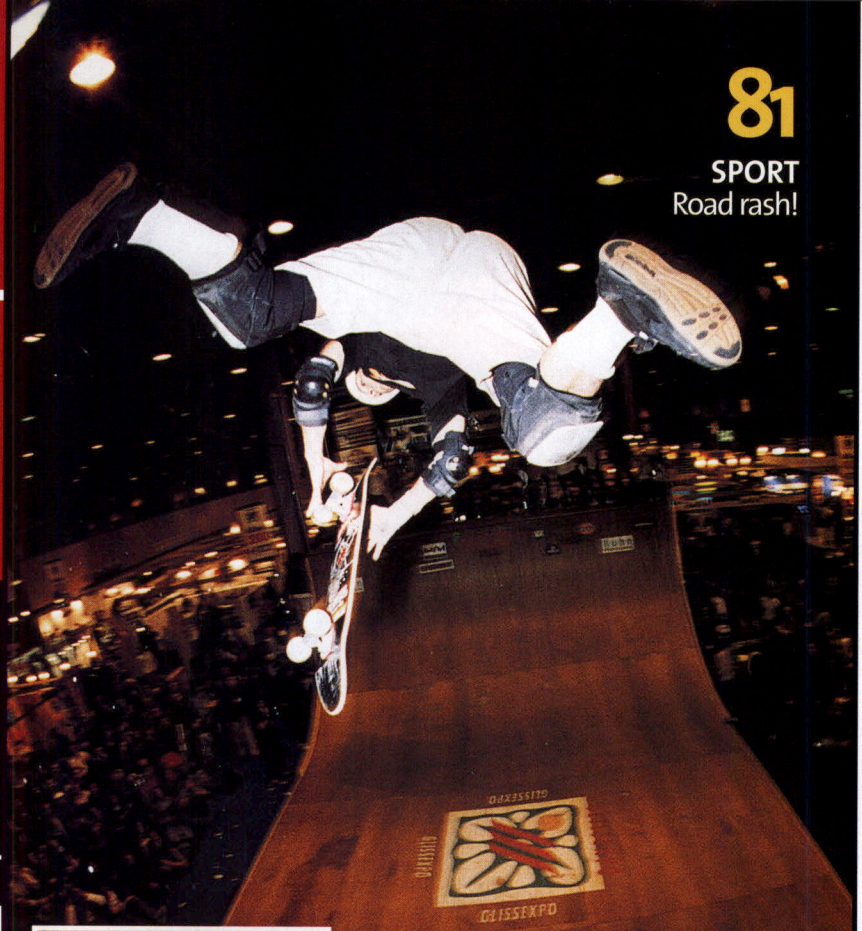
PLAYING MULTIMEDIA BROWSER WATCH
browserwatch.internet.com/plug-in.html
List of browser plug-ins.

REALPLAYER G2
www.real.com
Cross-platform free software for streaming movie (RealVideo) and audio (RealAudio) files across the Internet.

QUICKTIME 4.0
www.apple.com/quicktime
Version 4 of this multi-media software will play just about anything, including MP3 files.

MICROSOFT MEDIAPLAYER
www.microsoft.com/mediaplayer
Plays streaming audio and video files saved in the MediaPlayer format.

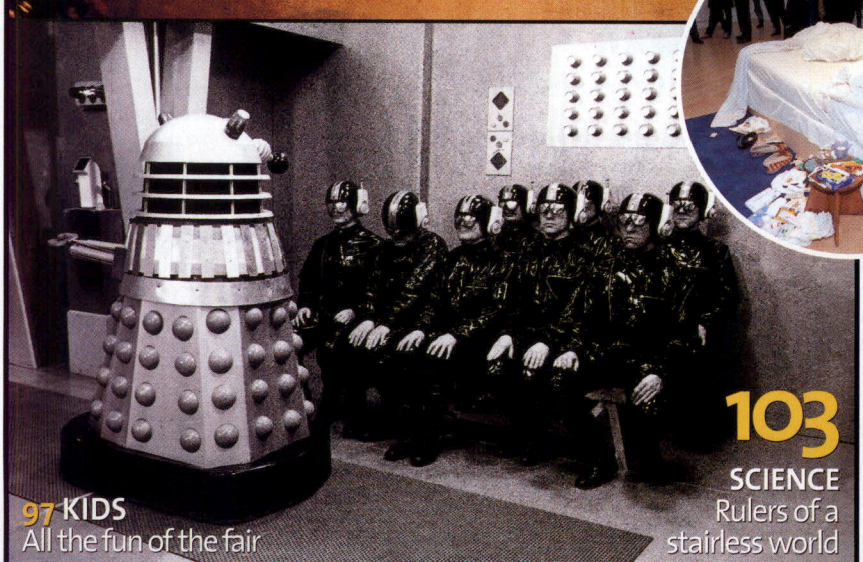
SHOCKWAVE & FLASH
www.shockwave.com
A must-have if you want to enjoy sound, great animation effects and even natty games on Web sites.



81
SPORT
Road rash!

91 HOMES
Be houseproud

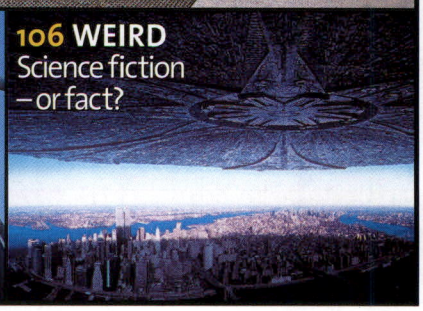
95 LEARNING
...but is it *art*?



97 KIDS
All the fun of the fair

103
SCIENCE
Rulers of a stairless world

106 WEIRD
Science fiction – or fact?



PICTURES: REX, LFI, KOBAL, PA, EMPICS

THE LISTINGS

AUGUST 2000

NEW MOVIE RELEASES 66
Cruise through the summer flicks

MOVIES SALES 68
Get some ideas on what DVD or video to buy – courtesy of the Web

TELEVISION 71
Ads: the 30-second wonders

NEW ALBUM RELEASES 72
Our pick of the latest sounds

MUSIC 75
The (Balearic) beat goes on...

SPORT CRICKET 78
Yup, time for stoicism in the face of (inevitable) defeat

SPORT 81
Skateboard sites sensation!

TRAVEL 82
Clothes: *not* required

NEWS & MEDIA 85
Online comic strips

MONEY 89
...and how to get some

HOMES 91
Learn how to be houseproud

HEALTH 92
Rash decisions

LEARNING 95
Could you be the next Picasso?

KIDS 97
Choose a theme park online

GAMES 100
Honest-to-goodness cheating

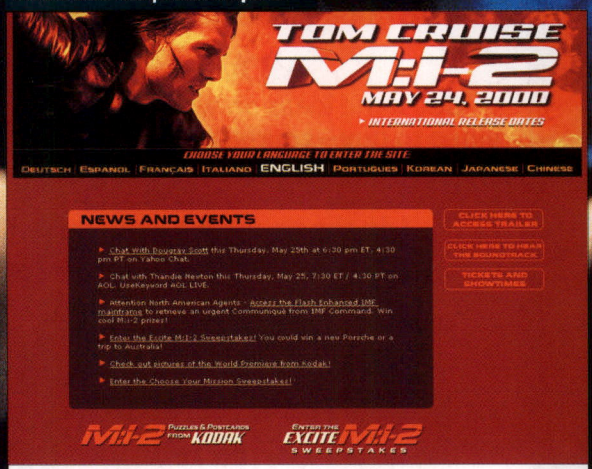
SCIENCE 103
Top 'bots

HISTORY 104
No Lovejoys here, thank you

WEIRD 106
Where the impossible is possible

NEED TO KNOW 108
Sorted sites

Cruise: never ever paid for his petrol



Mission: Impossible 2

Tom Cruise, Dougray Scott ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

With action film maestro John Woo (*Face/Off*) at the helm, M:I2 is destined to be this summer's dead-cert adrenaline ride. Tom Cruise returns as Ethan Hunt to foil a rogue IMF agent's plot to release a deadly virus. Though over the top, to say it's thrilling is a massive understatement – some breathtaking set-pieces, including a motorcycle chase that's as stunning as it is ludicrously enjoyable. A different beast to the first one, but one with a ferocious sense of excitement.

www.missionimpossible.com *Register as an agent in a superb Flash-heavy site filled with games, competitions and film info.*

Man with a mission

MOVIE RELEASES Danny Graydon takes a Cruise through the newest films

***Chicken Run*: just ducking brilliant**

Chicken Run

Mel Gibson, Julia Sawalha

★★★★★

After Wallace and Gromit tasted Oscar glory, Nick Park heeded Hollywood's call and delivered this much-anticipated feature. A comedy drama set on a sinister Yorkshire farm in the 1950s, Rocky the rooster and Ginger the chicken decide to rebel, leading their fellow chickens in a great escape. Slapstick, action and romance mix wonderfully in a series of breathtaking sequences that will amaze both kids and adults. Unmissable.

www.chickenrun.co.uk *Just the trailer and a mailing list, but more to come...*

The Flintstones: Viva Rock Vegas

Mark Addy, Stephen Baldwin ★

A prequel to the 1994 original, what starts as promising soon descends into a directionless mess. You know there's trouble when every rock-related pun imaginable is plumbed (Mick Jagged and The Stones??). Dopey humour and lazy performances don't help the slight story of a villain trying to steal Wilma's family fortune. Redeeming feature? The visual style of the cartoon has translated well to screen, but can that alone stave off extinction?

www.vivarockvegas.com *Packed site let down by clunky navigation and bad animation.*

Gone in 60 Seconds

Nicolas Cage, Angelina Jolie ★★★

Fresh off the Jerry Bruckheimer (*The Rock*) conveyor belt is this entertaining no-brainer of a heist movie. Nicolas Cage leads a ragtag band of car thieves (including Vinnie Jones) who must steal 50 cars in one night in order to save his brother, a Mafia target. All the familiar elements are here: hugely destructive car chases? Check. Heavy RAWK! soundtrack? Check. Corny Patriotism? Check! Tailor-made for the multiplexes.

***Gone In 60 Seconds*: a real no-brainer**

www.gonein60seconds.com *Site based on the 1974 original and the remake. Visually average, but informative.*

High Fidelity

John Cusack, Iben Hjejle ★★★★

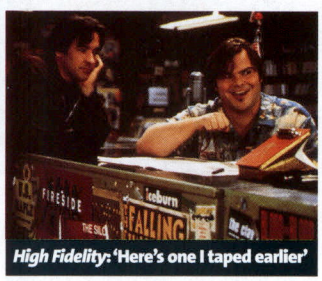
Despite being relocated to Chicago, this film of the cult novel works an absolute treat, much of it thanks to the insurmountable charisma of star John Cusack. As Rob, he recounts tales of lost loves through his vast record collection, while arguing with his record store employees. That's it; but what a wonderful film this is. If you've ever made a tape for someone special, then miss this at your peril.

studio.go.com/movies/highfidelity/

WHAT THE SITES ARE SAYING

	aint-it-cool-news.com	cinemachine.com	cinematter.com	eonline.com	film.com	salon.com
The Flintstones	👎	👎	👎	👍	👎	👎
High Fidelity	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍	👍
Mission: Impossible 2	😐	😐	😐	👍	😐	👎
The Road to Eldorado	👍	😐	😐	😐	😐	😐
U-571	👍	👍	👍	👎	👍	👎

PICTURES: IMAGENET, KOBAL



High Fidelity: 'Here's one I taped earlier'

index.html *Very Funny site filled with monologues from the film as well bios and a gallery.*

The Patriot

Mel Gibson, Joely Richardson ★★★

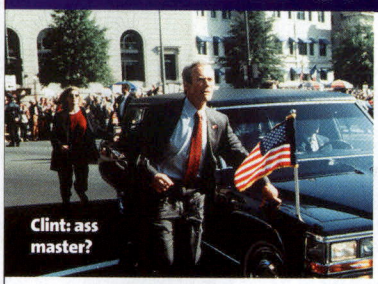
Once again, Mel Gibson tackles the struggle of freedom against tyranny – this time in the American Revolution. When British forces kidnap his son, veteran soldier Ben Martin is drawn in to conflict to protect his family and way of life. While the battle scenes are superb and the film is bolstered by some great performances, you may be put off by the rabid anti-British rhetoric and an alarming similarity to *Braveheart*.

Gibson: rather smaller in real life

www.thepatriot.com *History-heavy site – worth it for the hilarious 'Discuss Freedom' section.*

CLASSIC FILM

IN THE LINE OF FIRE



Clint: ass master?

Clint Eastwood, John Malkovich *(1993)*

No one does the ageing action hero like Clint, evident in this cracking cat and mouse thriller. Clint is Frank Horrigan, the Secret Service Agent who failed to protect JFK. When an assassin threatens the current President, 'Dirty Harry' must return to protection detail and face his past. With indescribably tense scenes, action with intelligence and Clint both grizzled and vulnerable, this is both superior and well-crafted, ranking alongside *Unforgiven* as top late-period Eastwood. And, with Clint growling the immortal line: 'You have a rendezvous with my ass, mother****!', what more do you want?**

www.clinteastwood.net ***The most comprehensive Clint site on the Web.***

The Road to Eldorado

Kevin Kline, Kenneth Branagh ★★★

Now a serious threat to Disney, Dreamworks SKG provides a vivid combination of animation and computer graphics. However, that alone does not make a good film. *The Road to Eldorado* is content to be a good old romp, with two cons gaining a map to the fabled city. Free of serious themes and uplifting lessons, what you have is a colourful, energetic tale – for all ages.

www.roadtoeldorado.com *Standard info, but built around an entertaining Flash game.*

Stuart Little

Hugh Laurie, Geena Davis ★★★

A mammoth US hit, this gentle comedy of a family that adopts a talking mouse (really) will enthrall kids, but may bemuse adults. That said, the special effects are startling, and the rivalry between Stuart and the family cat, Snowbell, steals the show. Charming and fun – if you can get past the ludicrous premise.

www.stuartlittle.com *Garish effort with lots of interactive elements. Fun.*

***Titan AE*: formulaic, clichéd – great**

Titan AE

Matt Damon, Drew Barrymore ★★★★

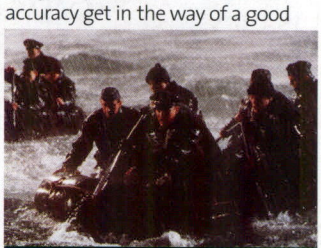
The animated *Titan AE* is set to be the sci-fi hit of the year. Set in the far future, the Earth has been destroyed and a teenager tries to find a spacecraft, which contains Earth's survivors and the chance of a new Earth. While predictable and not without a cliché, the mix of drama, comedy and adventure appeals.

www.afterearth.com/base.html *Glossy and atmospheric site with a great game.*

U-571

Harvey Keitel, Matthew McConaughey ★★★★

Hollywood has never let historical accuracy get in the way of a good story – certainly the case in this well crafted and tense adventure. In 1941, a German submarine is boarded by disguised American submariners trying to capture the Enigma cipher machine, which could change the course of the war. The cast expertly portrays the fear and stress as the German navy bears down. Not quite *Das Boot*...but a worthy contender.



***U-571*: 'Nice weather we're having...'**

www.u-571.com *Attractive and hugely informative site which focuses on both the film and history.*

THE ONES TO WATCH

VIDEO RELEASES What's showing at your local video shop this month

THE OUT-OF-TOWNERS

Steve Martin, Goldie Hawn

A one-joke skit that's stretched painfully to feature length, with Martin and Hawn playing a couple vexed by misfortune while in New York. Even the great John Cleese can't save the mediocre set-up and the shameful lack of laughs, despite the talent involved.

www.outoftowners.com

ANGELA'S ASHES

Robert Carlyle, Emily Watson

Based on Frank McCourt's book, this sees a poor and downtrodden Irish family struggling against the odds. Visually beautiful, but it is as thoroughly depressing as *EastEnders*.

www.angelasashes.com

BICENTENNIAL MAN

Robin Williams, Sam Neill

This comedy, about a robot developing emotions in a quest to be more human, falters under Williams' 'man-child' shtick. Laughs are threatened by sugar overdose. ***Studio.go.com/movies/bicentennialman***

SLEEPY HOLLOW

Johnny Depp, Christina Ricci

Tim Burton makes a glorious return to his Gothic roots in this vivid chiller. Depp is excellent as the 'tec sent to a town plagued by beheadings. A bona-fide frightener.

www.sleepyhollowmovie.com

END OF DAYS

Arnold Schwarzenegger, Gabriel Byrne

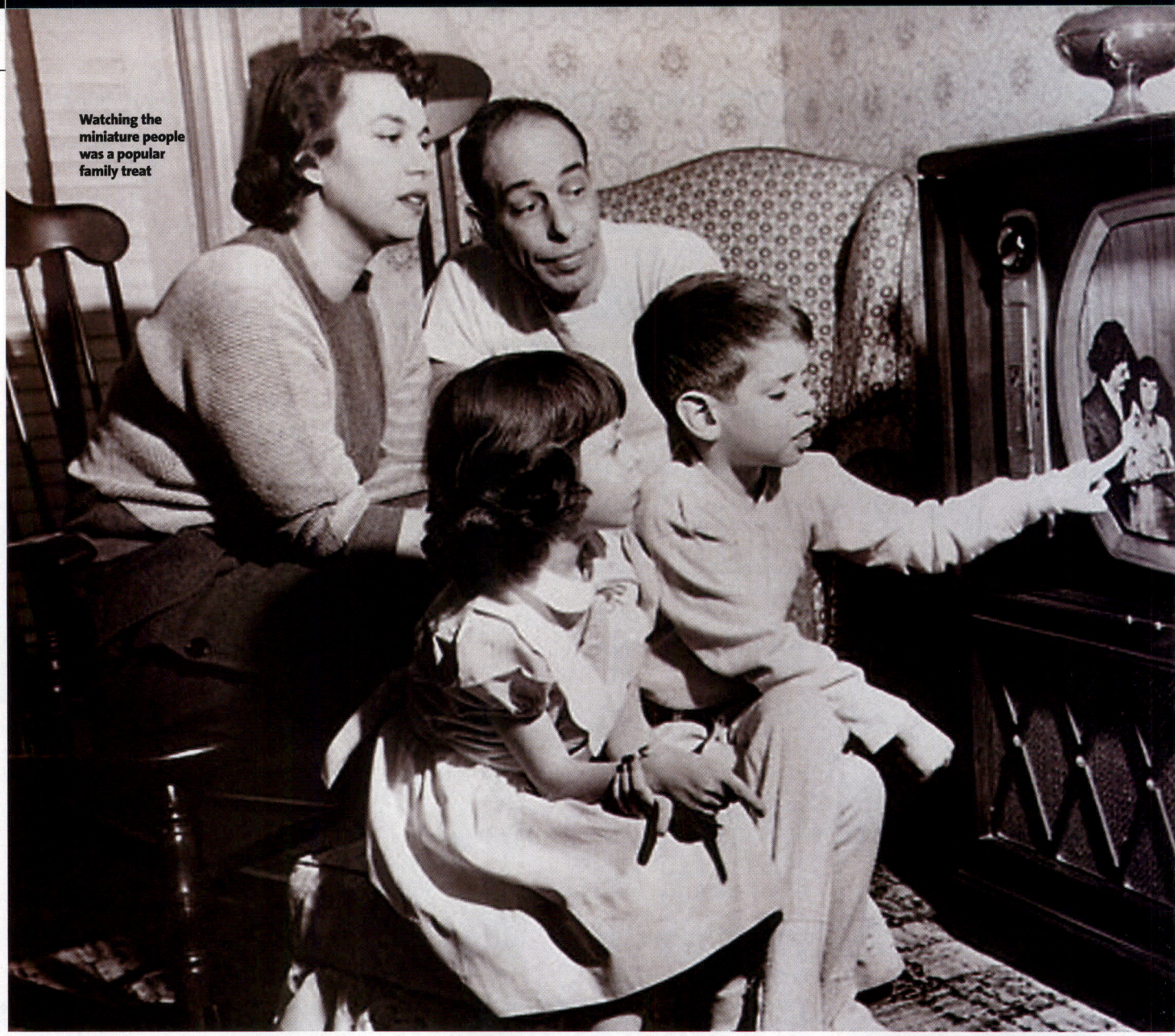
It's Arnie versus Satan! As ex-cop Jericho Cane (get the initials), he must prevent the Anti-Christ's child being born. Big stunts, gruesome moments and an excellently chilling performance from Byrne is let down by a sense of been there-done that.

www.end-of-days.com

BLUE STREAK

Martin Lawrence, Luke Wilson

An often hilarious buddy-cop film, a thief finds his hiding place for a diamond is now a cop shop. Posing as a 'tec, he aims to get the swag. An excellent beer 'n pizza flick. ***www.spe.sony.com/movies/bluestreak/index.html***



Watching the miniature people was a popular family treat

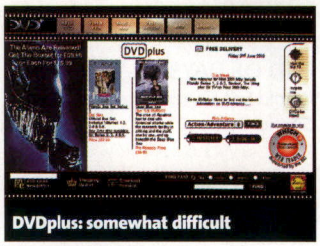
'Can we have the Lion King again?'

BUYING VIDEOS & DVDS Whether you're searching for a blockbuster or a long-forgotten classic, try the Web

DVDplus

www.dvdplus.co.uk ★★★

A massive pan-European range of DVDs, let down only by the lack of a 'browse' facility which makes visiting casually somewhat difficult. Still, if the whole format is something of a mystery, you could do worse than reading through the 'What is DVD?' section here, with its full explanation of technical terms and specifications. Alternatively, hit 'Inspire Me' and find yourself bombarded with (mostly unsuitable) film suggestions.



DVDplus: somewhat difficult

DVDstreet

www.dvdstreet.infront.co.uk

★★★★

From the people who brought you the online music retailer Audiostreet (and not forgetting to mention book dealers Alphabetstreet) comes an extensive DVD site. What you see with the street series is what you get: an easy-to-navigate interface, all-inclusive prices – and plenty of bargains. Which is about all you could ask for from a DVD site, really.

Filmstore

www.filmstore.co.uk ★★★

Run by Odeon (the company behind the cinemas), Filmstore boasts a more-than-reasonable range of DVDs, widescreen and videos. The biggest problem here, however, is the lack of a decent browse facility, which means that if you haven't already got a fair idea of what you're looking for, you won't find many useful suggestions. The merchandise and soundtracks section, which is apparently coming soon, sounds more promising.

Check out the flicks at filmstore.co.uk

FilmVault

www.filmvault.co.uk ★★★

Can't find that long-lost 'special interest' video you're just desperate to see? Give FilmVault a try, and they'll carry out an extensive search for your title (keeping you updated on their progress by email) and sell you the resultant video at a reasonable price. And, if you've got a garage-load of old stock to clear, they'll take it off your hands for you. Nice people.

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; PICTURES: CORBIS, PA

BlackStar

www.blackstar.co.uk ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

BlackStar has long been regarded as the undisputed king of online video sales – and it's not difficult to see why. Almost everything about the site is impeccably thought out: navigation is a breeze, prices are impressively comprehensive and the ordering process is simplicity personified. The range of videos is vast (but it's all alphabetically ordered and cross-referenced by cast and director, making browsing easy), and the sub-section on arthouse films is a joy for the eclectically-minded. All in all, an admirably professional site – and an Internet must-see.

VIDEO AFTERLIFE

'GRANNY'S BACK!'

Elderly relative about to pop their clogs? Then why not keep their memory alive forever with a video narrative of their life story? It might sound ever so slightly macabre, but Living Memoirs at *www.gis.net/~leibco/livingmemoirs* will do just that for you, blending music, memories and family video footage to create 'invaluable keepsakes for generations to come'. At $3,000, however, the phrase 'invaluable' isn't quite so appropriate. Still, if you'll miss the sound of Granny's nagging when she's finally gone, here's one way to ensure she never really passes over to the 'other side'...

Filmworld

www.filmworld.co.uk ★★★★

For an award-winning e-commerce site, Filmworld couldn't actually be more impenetrable. Don't give up at the first glance, though – just about everything you could possibly want film-wise lies under this one roof. And it's not just videos and DVDs either, but posters, books, soundtracks, trailers, listings and reviews. A thing of joy.

Ken Cranes

www.kencranes.com ★★★★

The online Daddy of the DVD world (not to mention laserdisc, too). Film buffs have long been importing the latest titles direct from the States, and Ken Cranes boasts a far more extensive range than any of its rivals (even if its vast catalogue would be better served by a slightly less confusing interface). Skip straight to the well-hidden search engine if you want rapid results.

Reel.com

www.reel.com ★★★★

Reel has always been something more than just an e-tailer. You can, of course, import just about any title you care to name here, but there's far more besides – principally reviews (among the best on the Web, with genuine impartiality, even though they're trying to flog you the titles they're reviewing), multimedia and trailers in the highly recommended 'Screening Room.'

Loo roll's come a long way since the 40s

VideoEmpire

www.videoempire.com ★★★

Not the first place to go if you want the latest releases, but an excellent place to buy used videos or trade your pre-viewed titles with fellow collectors. The conversion service is also a novel bonus – send the site your tapes and have them converted into PAL (the UK standard) for just £5 a pop.

VideoParadise

www.videoparadise.com ★★★★

Early WH Smith forays into e-commerce were marked out by tiny text and a confusing navigation system. With Video Paradise, however, the High Street giant has got it spectacularly right. The search engine here, in particular, is brilliant: all the reviews are lengthy and intelligent. If you prefer shopping with a name you know, start here.

best movies sites ★★★★★

where can I...

GET LATEST NEWS AND RELEASE DATES?

www.popcorn.co.uk
British perspective on new releases.
aint-it-cool-news.com
Gives the inside track on new films.
www.filmunlimited.co.uk
Views and news from *The Guardian*.
uk.imdb.com
The bible of online film – use the search engine or you'll soon be lost.

DECIDE WHAT TO SEE?

cinemachine.com
Retrieves film reviews from across the Web.
www.filmreview.co.uk
A UK-based review site to rival the Americans.
www.mrqe.com
Flamboyantly-titled Movie Review Query Engine with 17,000+ films.
www.movie-trailers.com
Trailers for all the newest films.

FIND OFFICIAL FILM SITES?

www.foxmovies.com
Links to 20th Century Fox releases.
www.movies.warnerbros.com
WB's new films and lost classics.
www.disney.co.uk/DisneyMovies
All the kids' faves in one go.

Film news and reviews at popcorn.co.uk

WATCH OR POST AMATEUR SHORT FILMS?

www.cinemanow.com
A portal site for new films from around the world.
www.getoutthere.bt.com
BT-owned amateur movie site.
www.urbanchillers.com
Scary new horror flicks to download.
www.sightsound.com
The place to see *The Quantum Project* – the first full-length, full-budget Net film.

FIND A CINEMA?

www.uci-cinemas.co.uk
A great search engine to locate current film screenings across the country.
www.odeon.co.uk
To book online, or peruse the very latest information.
cinema.scoot.co.uk
From the people behind the comprehensive directory.
www.cineworld.co.uk
UK film portal that also includes a cinema finder.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

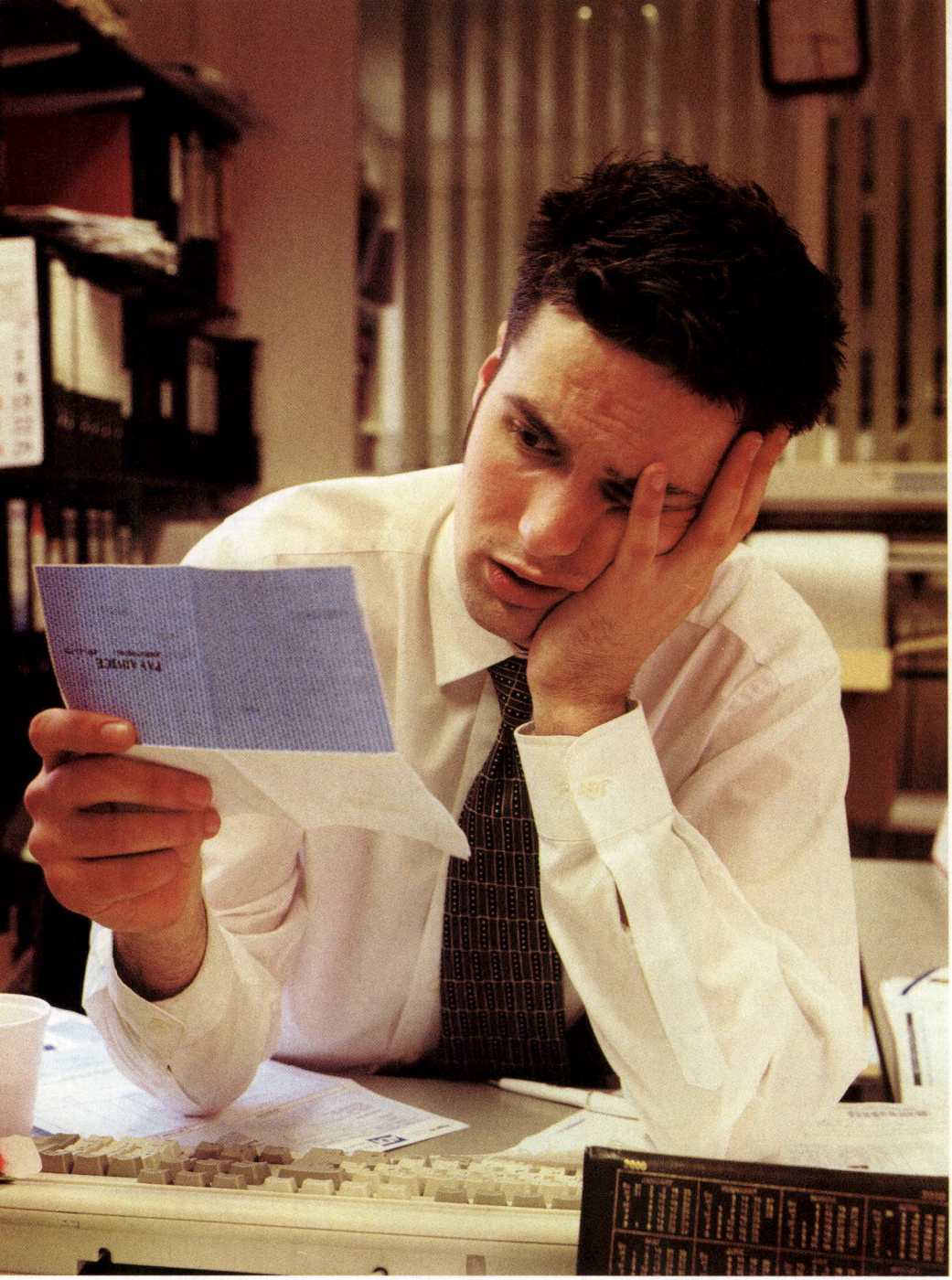
alt.video.dvd
Get the lowdown on that tricky new format here.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Discuss the art of film-making by sending an email marked 'subscribe film-theory' to ***Majordomo@lists.village.virginia.edu***

GET CHATTING?

buzzcom.com
Get the latest word on new movies before they're out over here.



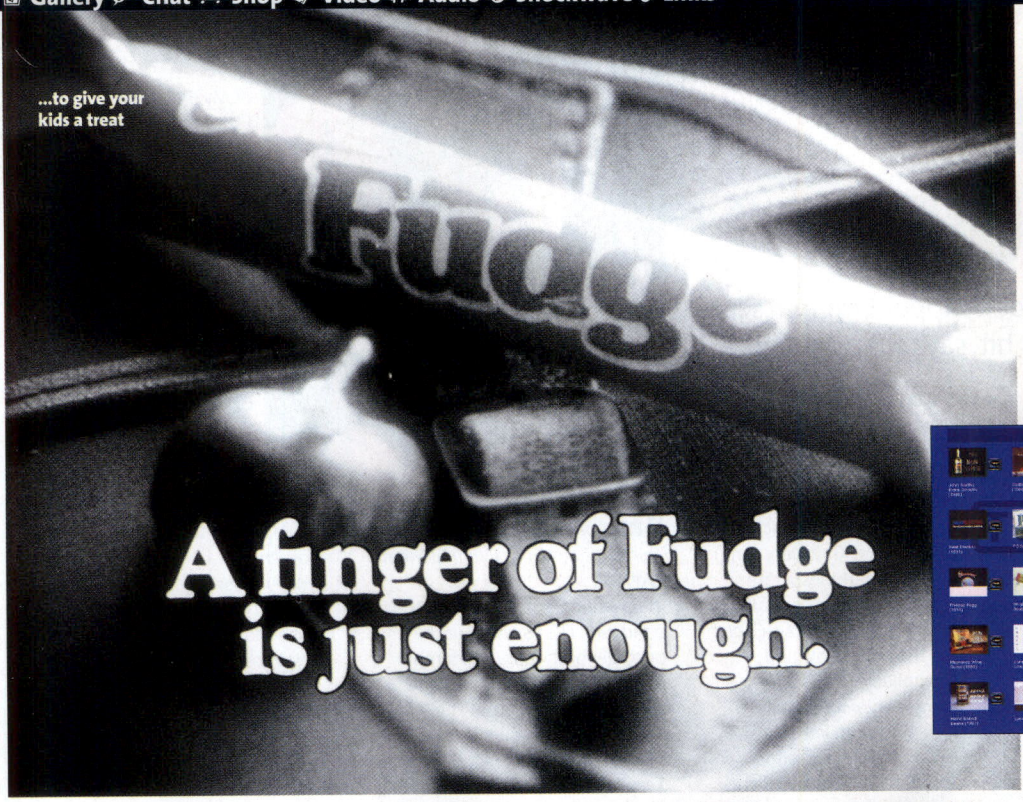
not paid enough?

start taking the piss.

don't work // **play games**

download the best computer games for free at

freeloader.com



TV Ark

www.bognor.force9.co.uk/adverts.html ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Like the John Smiths advert, there's no nonsense here – just 41 (and rising) RealVideo clips of adverts from the 60s to the present – a finger of Fudge, Heineken refreshing the parts, Tango man, Guinness with the surfing horses, the Smash robots, Arfur Daley laughing all the way to the Leeds and, best of all, Shake 'n' Vac putting the freshness back. Then check the rest of the TV Ark site for opening titles from hundreds of programmes. Great fun.

Don't touch that kettle!

TV ADVERTS Let's face it, they're better than half the shows they appear in

Ad Critic

www.adcritic.com ★★★★

Huge site taking a *Top of the Pops*-style approach to ads, with new releases, a Top Ten and so on. It's American, so don't expect Greene King adverts, but there's a sizeable database of emailable ads (careful now, they're large). There's a news section, and links to Amazon let you buy all the backing music.

Gaijin A Go-go Café

www.zeroonedesign.com/gogo/main.html ★★★

A great idea for a site, capitalising on an interesting commercial phenomenon: even the biggest Hollywood stars (step forward Leo) are happy to make mugs of themselves in Japanese ads, thinking they're safely out of sight. Not any more: the Gaijin A Go-go Café caustically exposes Arnie, Demi, Keanu, Connery – and the rest.

Martians: a family smash

TV Party Outrageous Commercials

www.tvparty.com/emcomm.html ★★★★

Outrageousness abounds in this two-page gallery of dodgy old American ads. Gasp as a lipsticked lady gobbles a banana in an overtly sexual way! Goggle as an airline ad features a stripping stewardess! Rub your eyes as Fred Flintstone endorses Winston cigarettes! Be bamboozled as a 1958 Dodge car is shot from a cannon!

UK Television Adverts

www.westwood.u-net.com/ads/ads.htm ★★★

Impressive, if slightly overwhelming, database of more than 2,000 TV adverts which have appeared since 1996. If you're dying to know who the blonde was in the Peugeot ad, how many voiceovers Hugh Laurie has done, or you want to purchase the backing music from Amazon, this is the place. However, there are only a dozen downloadable adverts.

Hungry Fivebellies waited for postie

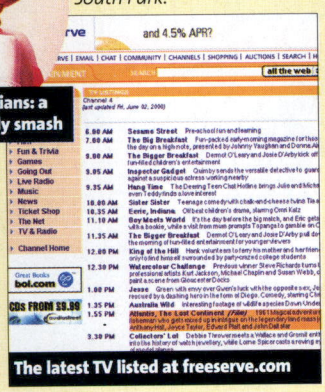
best TV sites ★★★★★ where can I...

FIND PROGRAMME GUIDES FOR POPULAR SHOWS?

www.onlyfools.net
Shrine to *Only Fools And Horses*.

www.snpp.com/episodeguide.html
Every *Simpsons* episode ever made is listed here.

www.beef-cake.com
At-a-glance guide to *South Park*.



BUY TV MEMORABILIA?

www.tvtoys.com
Pick up TV toys, books – and more.

www.universal-studios.net/movieprops.html
Log in and head for the shop.

www.noveltytogs.com
A great source for *South Park* and *Simpsons* stuff in pounds sterling.

FIND TV LISTINGS?

www.toaster.co.uk
Electronic programme guide.

www.freeserve.com/tvnradio
Use the handy instant soap update.

www.radiotimes.beeb.com
The listings magazine online.

www.digiguide.co.uk
Custom-built UK telly listings.

WATCH TV?

www.virtuetv.co.uk
Live events and classic films.

www.dvtv.co.uk
The UK's first Net-only station.

www.broadcast.com
If it's going live, it'll be listed here.

www.livetv.wwitv.com
Hook up with 100+ live TV stations around the world.

FIND TV NEWS AND INFO?

tv.cream.org
One of the best sites for old shows.

www.bigglethwaite.com
Definitive guide to British TV online.

www.ultimatetv.com
US biased; try the 'Ask Mr TV' facility.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.media.tv.misc
Perfect for television nostalgics.

GET CHATTING?

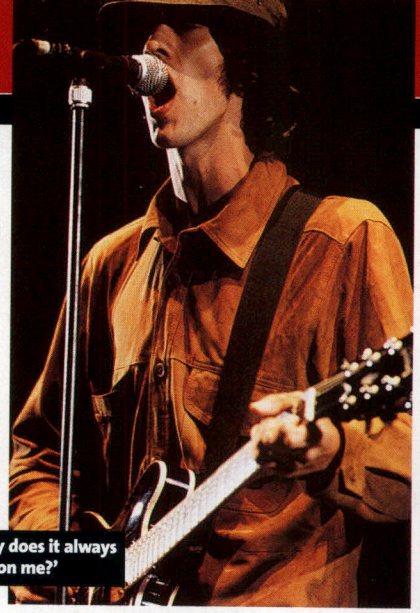
www.stormloader.com/coronation
A regular *Coronation Street* discussion forum.

Looking for more Television sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: GARY PARKINSON

No more Mr Nice Guy

NEW ALBUMS Obscenity-ridden rapper Eminem's latest opus is a foul-mouthed hit, says John Mullen

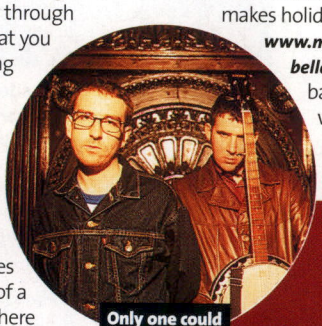


'Why does it always rain on me?'

...And You Will Know Us By The Trail Of Dead

Madonna **MERGE** ★★★★

A band positively dripping with malevolence, Texas' ...Trail Of Dead have great difficulty finding venues to book them due to their annoying habit of trashing their gear before they play a note. This album is a warped masterpiece, a high-adrenaline journey through middle America that you can imagine coming straight from the head of Charles Manson. Be afraid. Be very afraid. ***www.trailofdead.com*** The band's own site, with an archive that includes a brilliant account of a gig in Columbus where the band were all beaten up by the club's manager.



Only one could be the belle of the ball...

Richard Ashcroft

Alone With Everybody **HUT** ★★★

The former Verve frontman's first solo album is going to come as a shock to lovers of *Bittersweet Symphony* and *The Drugs Don't Work*. This time the vibe is far more relaxed, with tracks like *New York* evoking such 70s acts as Supertramp and Wings. Quite nice in a summery kind of way, but is this really the guy who gave us Northern Soul?

www.odc.net/~ssharma/verve/ Excellent Verve site, with a list of forthcoming events for Dicky boy.

Belle & Sebastian

Fold Your Hands Child, You Walk Like A Peasant **JEEPSTER** ★★★★

These Scottish folkies have always been contrary monkeys. They're finally getting the musical acclaim they've craved, then they release the most miserable, melancholic album of their career. It's still sublime, though – tracks like *The Model* (not the Kraftwerk song) have an edge of dark, desperate humour that suggests too many nights on the Buckfast, while *Chalet Lines* does the impossible and makes holiday camps sexy.

www.myspace.co.uk/belleandsebastian/ The band's own site, which includes their almost comically dull online diary.

Dandy Warhols

Thirteen Tales From Urban Bohemia **CAPITOL** ★★★★

Internationally renowned as the band who like to get topless onstage (both male and female members), the Dandy's second album shows them getting all serious on us. So there's none of the silly pop delights of *Not If You Were The Last Junkie On Earth* – instead they've harnessed a driving, hypnotic drone that's more reminiscent of *My Bloody Valentine*. Excellent stuff, even if their glamour-puss days are well behind them.

www.dandywarhols.com The band's official site, with a suitably debauched collection of photos.

Darren Emerson

Global Underground 15: Uruguay **GLOBAL UNDERGROUND** ★★★★

Cockney geezer Emerson recently left techno gods Underworld to concentrate on his DJ-ing. And judging by this set of top 'choons, he shouldn't have to worry when rent day comes around. The beats never dip below a rush-inducing 120bpm, and with an ingenious array of music ranging from Dave Clarke to Frankie Goes To Hollywood, this album should come free with a complimentary whistle.

www.muzikus.cz/dance/emer.htm No official Web site for Emerson yet, but here are some silly photos of the master DJ for you to laugh at.

ALBUM OF THE MONTH

Eminem

The Marshall Mathers LP **POLYDOR** ★★★★★

Truly, the man does not give a f*. NSync, Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears, Insane Clown Posse and Jennifer Lopez all receive an Eminem tongue-lashing on this savage follow-up to his groundbreaking *The Slim Shady LP*. With guest appearances from his old mentor Dr Dre, Eminem displays his genius for mixing verbal assaults with the kind of glorious pop that bands like NSync would kill for. Isn't it ironic?**

www.eminem.com **A site that's pretty fly for a white guy, with lots of sound files for the obscenity-hungry.**

PICTURES: RETNA, ANGELA LUBRANO

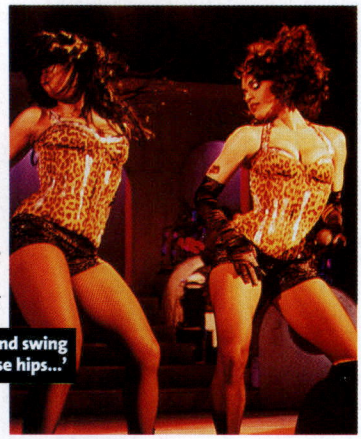
En Vogue

Masterpiece Theatre **ELEKTRA**

★★★★

Good pub fact – En Vogue are gothic gloom-meister Robert Smith's favourite band. And no wonder. Listening to this fantastic comeback album, even the perennially depressed couldn't fail to be cheered by the girls' luminous gift for angelic harmonies. Even more musically inventive than their direct descendants TLC, the Vogue are equally at home swiping classical riffs as they are at re-jigging the theme tune to *The Godfather*. Classy stuff.

www.fortune city.com/greenfield/runningbrook/51/ev.html Lots of fantastic info, just a shame the pictures aren't really up to scratch.



'...and swing those hips...'

Various

The Filth And The Fury Soundtrack

VIRGIN ★★★★★

The soundtrack album to Julian Temple's astonishing documentary about the rise and fall of the Sex Pistols, this album is all the more vital when 'punk' has been appropriated by big-shorted baboons like Limp Bizkit and Korn. Pistols tracks like *Anarchy In The UK* and *Pretty Vacant* are put into context by the inclusion of dreadful 70s tracks like the Bay City Rollers' *Shang-A-Lang*, plus a couple of reggae tracks to demonstrate that punk's roots were in Jamaica rather than the Kings Road. Awesome.

www.filthand fury.com The film's official site, with a scary 'Warning! This site contains harsh language!' as you go in.

The bewildered rapper failed to spot the incoming hand

Kathryn Williams

Little Black Numbers **CAW**

★★★★

Tipped to be the 'next Beth Orton', Williams is in fact much, much better than that. With a voice that makes grown men weep into their beer, this is a loving collection of songs about the trials of ordinary life – standout track *Stood* memorably accuses her beau of making her 'miss good shows on the radio'. An understated classic that's as appealing to ravers with headaches as couples looking for a car tape as they drive to Ikea.

www.algon et.se/~iguana/DRAKE/DRAKE.html No site for Williams yet, so why not read about her main influence Nick Drake on this consistently updated site?

The cut out was quite realistic

Stevie Wonder

Talking Book/Innervisions

MOTOWN ★★★★★

A re-release of two of the great man's 70s masterpieces – without these records there'd be no Jamiroquai, but that's no reason not to buy them. *Talking Book* marked the leap from Wonder the pop artist to Wonder the psychedelic voyager, but *Innervisions* is the real treasure, an enormously rich collection of tunes that moved between liberal politics (*Jesus Children Of America*) and heartbreaking romance (*Golden Lady*) with enviable ease. Essential.

www.xmission.com/~dan_nan/wonder/stevie.html Unofficial site with a comprehensive list of Wonder guest appearances and some nice cartoons, rather than the usual boring photos.

CLASSIC ALBUM

IRON MAIDEN

Number Of The Beast **EMI (1982)**

The mighty Maiden have just reformed with singer Bruce Dickinson again, though it's unlikely that they'll be able to come up with anything even a millionth as good as this behemoth of a record. The sound of the four horsemen of the apocalypse coming over the hill armed simply with V-necked guitars, only the decidedly dodgy *22 Acacia Avenue* ('Beat her! Mistreat her!') spoils the Satanic vibe. Hellish, but in a good way.

www.netsector.com/tony/maiden/home.htm Excellent fan site, with MP3s, new photos of the band and (most rewarding of all), a picture of the mulletted geek who put this site together. Rockin'!

GIG AND TOUR GUIDE

AUGUST Festival season gets into full swing...

JAMES BROWN

One-off date for your favourite gun-toting funk superstar.

7 July Shepherd's Bush Empire

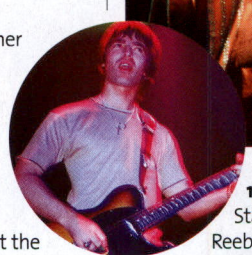
www.funky-stuff.com

ESSENTIAL FESTIVAL 2000

Superior dance music festival featuring Bentley Rhythm Ace, Fatboy Slim and DJ Rap.

15-16 July Brighton Stanmer Park

www.bentleyrhythmace.com



DAVID GRAY

Soulful Irish crooner who's certain to be this year's Macy Gray. Without the breasts, obviously.

3 August Shepherd's Bush Empire

www.davidgray.com

OASIS

One of the tracks on their album is called *Where Did It All Go Wrong?*. Arf.

15 July Bolton Reebok Stadium **16 July** Bolton Reebok Stadium **21 July** London Wembley Stadium **22 July** London Wembley Stadium

www.oasisinet.com

BETH ORTON

Slender folkie rubs the sleep out of her eyes for a couple of hotly-anticipated dates.

7 July Newcastle University

10 July Cambridge Junction

homepages.enterprise.net/jbromley/BethOrton/BethIndex.html

T IN THE PARK

Scottish answer to Glastonbury, but a more snoozesome line-up, with Ocean Colour Scene, Fun Lovin' Criminals and (of course!) Travis.

8-9 July Balado, Kinross

www.tinthepark.com

David went to St. Mary's Primary School.

So did Peter.

David played up front for Clifford Rovers.

So did Peter.

David lost his virginity to Julie Gordon.

So did Peter.

David left school and moved to London.

So did Peter.

David found a 1965 Lambretta on QXL.com and placed a bid for it.

So did Peter.

Some things are best kept to yourself

QXL.com

online auctions

The aliens waited patiently for the mother ship

Global Spirit

www.global-spirit.com/Ibiza/frames.htm ★★★★★

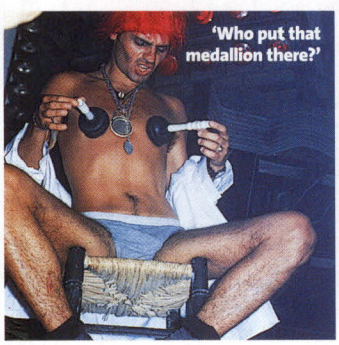
thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

This is the ultimate Ibiza portal and will eventually take you to most of the sites relating to 'The White Island'. The Hotel and accommodation links are a particularly useful way of finding great places to stay. It includes loads of great villas and small apartment blocks all over the island and gives comprehensive prices for everything. Admittedly these are in pesetas, but there is a currency converter attached to most of them. Don't head south without stopping here first.

Beachbeats.com

www.beachbeats.com ★★★

Drawing on the combined expertise of Mixmag's Ibiza bible *Mixmag Out There* and bargainholidays.com, this is ideal for the sofa-dwelling clubber: book your trip and plan nights out without breaking the pizza-guzzling cycle. But you are more likely to find yourself fighting with Burnley girls for towel space on a beach in San Antonio if you book a last-minute trip here.


'Who put that medallion there?'

Ibiza uncovered

IBIZA Planning to 'ave it large' this summer? Don't forget to pack the Ambre Solaire – or the Internet

Ibiza Bangkok Web

www.ibiza-bangkok.com ★

Follow the fortunes of comedy Kraut love-child Norbert as he takes you on a tour of 'Ibiza – where I love to live!'. Sadly, this one is a bit low on information, but fans of the Web creations of semen-encrusted bedroom geeks will enjoy Norbert's collection of thongs and G-strings which he just happened to notice while at the beach.

Ibiza Spotlight

www.ibiza-spotlight.com ★★★★

Despite their distant, condescending air, and propensity for roasting their faultless naked frames on the secret coves and mountain-tops that Ibiza hides from pasty tourist hordes, the long-term residents of the island do have their uses. One of the best is this site which will guide you to restaurants, accommodation and bars that you wouldn't have found otherwise. And lottery winners or members of Oasis can even use it to find themselves a decent second home.

Tong: in the area, apparently

Which one uses sunblock?

Ibiza Trips

www.ibizatrips.com ★★★

Every summer, provincial England whips off oil-stained overalls and telephone headsets, packs a bag full of shiny button-down shirts and heads off for two weeks of sleeping on a Lilo in the corner of a dilapidated Spanish apartment. Ibiza Trips allows you to avoid this, and plan a Balearic holiday with VIP status the whole way. You can even book to stay at the invite-only Manumission Motel along with the strippers, DJs and celebrity visitors.

Manumission

www.manumission.com ★★★

Find out the latest goings on at the home of the biggest weekly party in the entire world. Manumission is the club that everyone visits at least once when they go to Ibiza, and getting tickets can be an ordeal. Keep an eye on the latest details here and avoid wasting half your holiday queuing with the rest of the muppets to get tickets. And if you book your trip through Manumission, then you'll get VIP entry to the club as part of the deal.

Ministry Of Sound

www.ministryofsound.com/life/ibiza ★★

At the time of writing, the wasters at Ministry of Sound have clearly been doing too much clubbing and not enough work on their Web site. There is currently a nice flash movie packed with sexy Ibiza images, music and sweeping statements like "Ave it large!' But there's no information yet. Ministry will be producing their guide *Ministry In Ibiza* again this year though so this should be as good a source as any for clubbing information – once they get their act together.

WORDS: DAVE MCLAUGHLIN; PICTURES: REX, RICHARD LAWRENCE

MTV

www.mtve.com ★★★★

MTV's visit to Ibiza is one of the biggest events of the season – unless you ask Radio 1 who also do a 'Biggest event of the season'. Last year MTV's show attracted some 12,000 saucer-eyed revellers and this year's line-up (14&15 July) looks like topping that. Anyone who spent a week in bed after catching pneumonia in the mud at Homelands will relish the chance of a big dance event under the Ibiza sun to brush away the bad memories. All details are available here along with DJ interviews and news.

Remember – an unattended bath can be fatal

Radio 1

www.bbc.co.uk/radio1 ★★★★

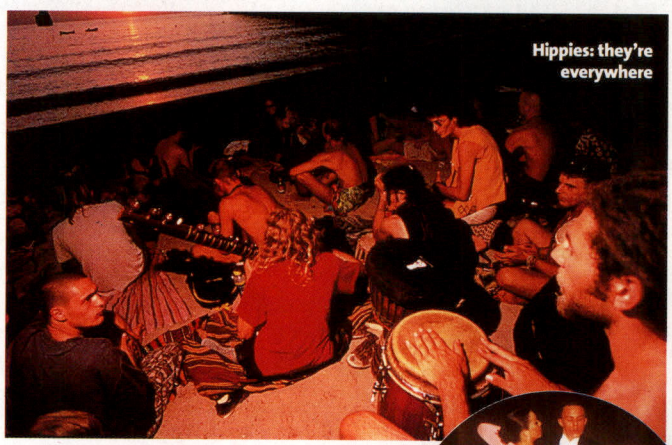
Radio 1's visit to the Balearics is always massive. The entire first week of August sees an endless stream of DJ's, TV presenters and liggers letting themselves down in front of the world – courtesy of the BBC. Two years ago, Lisa I'Anson famously 'forgot' to do her Radio One show when she got tired at the Manumission Motel and Norman Cook got off with Zöe Ball. The Radio 1 Web site will list the broadcasts and contains a guide to the island's restaurants – although it is aimed at punters who intend to exist entirely on a diet of fish & chips and San Miguel.

Holiday tip – go away with an ugly mate, you're sure to pull

Space Ibiza Beach Club

www.space-ibiza.com ★★★

Ibiza die-hards will tell you that Space is the best club on the island, running from 7am-evening with the biggest sessions being on Sundays and Tuesdays (following on from Manumission at Priveledge). This is the home of the party-going hard-core and you can watch them in action with space-ibiza.com's live Webcasts from inside the club. You can also get the latest event and ticket information.



Hippies: they're everywhere

ALTERNATIVE JIGGERY

'YOU DANCIN'?'

If the idea of a thousand young people jig-a-jigging in a giant disco overflowing with bubbles fills you with horror, perhaps you'd be better suited to a different form of dancing. The ballroom variety, for instance. But abandon that vision of a perma-tanned Angela Rippon interviewing a grinning gigolo gripping a 10 pence-piece between his butt-cheeks in a Blackpool hotel, for Ballroom Dancing is now an Olympic sport. Or rather 'Dancesport', to use its Olympian classification. Find out more at the huge site at *www.dancesport.uk.com*, which will tell you all you ever wanted to know. And more. Much, much more...

best music sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND A BAND SITE?

www.ubl.com
Make this the first stop on your quest – its search engine is huge.
www.bigmouth.co.uk
UK-specific site with tons of links.
www.musicsearch.com
Find artist sites or music services.
wallofsound.go.com
Links and features from the US.

READ THE LATEST NEWS AND REVIEWS?

www.rollingstone.com
The well-written US publication features extra online content.
www.nme.com
NME's online version has a solid reputation for breaking news.
www.qonline.com
Increasingly essential online version of the popular magazine.
www.dotmusic.com
British site for rock and pop news.

FIND GIGS AND TOURS?

www.ticketlinks.com
Full database of musical events, covering all styles. Also includes theatre and performing arts.
www.aloud.com
Brilliant search engine for gigs, with tickets to buy, too.
www.sceneone.co.uk
Easy to use entertainment portal.
www.wayahead.com
Reliable and competitively-priced ticket service

BUY NEW CDs?

www.yalplay.com
Popular CD and video store.
www.audiostreet.com
A cheap and easy-to-navigate store.
www.boxman.co.uk
Competitive and easy on the eye.
www.cdnow.com
One of the biggest CD stores.

FIND OUT ABOUT MP3s?

www.mp3now.com
A good MP3 portal now in the UK.
www.mp3place.com
Highly impressive database.
mp3.lycos.com
Browse the world of MP3s.
www.mp3.com
Original site; heaps of downloads.

POST MY BAND'S MP3s?

www.crunch.co.uk
Signs artists exclusively for the site.
www.peoplesound.com
A popular unsigned band portal.
www.vitaminic.co.uk
New, professional-looking MP3 site.

News and links – wallofsound.go.com

www.getoutthere.bt.com
BT-run film and music portal.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.music.trance
Get into the Ibiza groove in the UK.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

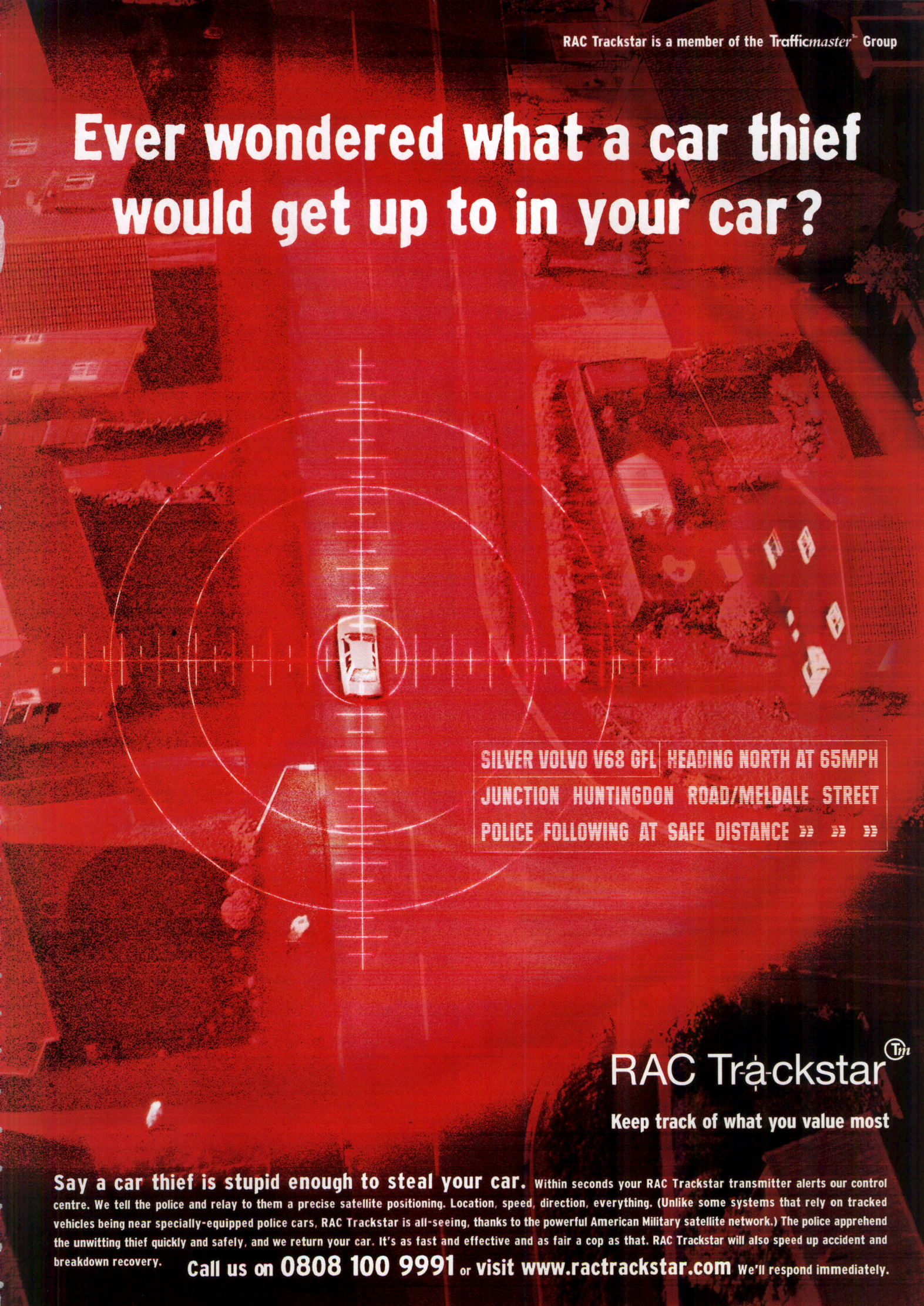
www.virtuetv.com for new shows.

GET CHATTING?

www.ibiza-magazine.com
Talk to residents or tourists here.

RAC Trackstar is a member of the Trafficmaster™ Group

Ever wondered what a car thief would get up to in your car?



RAC Trackstar™

Keep track of what you value most

Say a car thief is stupid enough to steal your car. Within seconds your RAC Trackstar transmitter alerts our control centre. We tell the police and relay to them a precise satellite positioning. Location, speed, direction, everything. (Unlike some systems that rely on tracked vehicles being near specially-equipped police cars, RAC Trackstar is all-seeing, thanks to the powerful American Military satellite network.) The police apprehend the unwitting thief quickly and safely, and we return your car. It's as fast and effective and as fair a cop as that. RAC Trackstar will also speed up accident and breakdown recovery.

Call us on 0808 100 9991 or **visit www.ractrackstar.com** We'll respond immediately.

'The batsman's Holding, the bowler's Willey'

CRICKET Roll out the whites – summer's here and Tests loom. Let the Web be your wicketkeeper

Barmy Army

www.barmy-army.com ★★★

Everywhere we go
People want to know
Who we are
Where we come from
So we tell them
Who we are
Where we come from
We are England
The mighty, mighty England
We are the Army
The Barmy, Barmy Army...

The Red Cross piss-ups were a sight to behold

Learn the many songs of the world's best travelling supporters and buy the latest Barmy Army gear online.

Cricket Crazy

www.cricketcrazy.co.uk ★★★

Fans are the lifeblood of any sport and their sites can offer a different slant on the game than the official versions. Cricket Crazy isn't the smoothest site in the world but it's updated every month with regular features, including Great Finals Of The Past. If you want a trip down memory lane or you want to know what fellow fans are thinking, this is worth a visit.

Cricket for America

home.sprynet.com/~hotoff/crickusa.htm ★★★★

Advice such as 'the only thing worse than tucking in a cold box from one's own bag is borrowing a warm, sweaty one from someone else's' is invaluable. The site's most productive contributor is the imaginatively-named Fanny Bush, which leads to every double entendre imaginable. Joking apart, this is a great offering – especially for ignorant Yanks.

Cricketline

www.cricketline.com ★★★

While some sites will enable you to find the most obscure of facts – like the batting average of the Glamorgan's second team's 12th man – there's a limit to just how much news and info you can handle in one go. So if you fancy a bit of fun, Cricketline offers games, celebrity chats, screensavers and a host of interesting features.

Cricket Unlimited

www.cricketunlimited.co.uk ★★★★

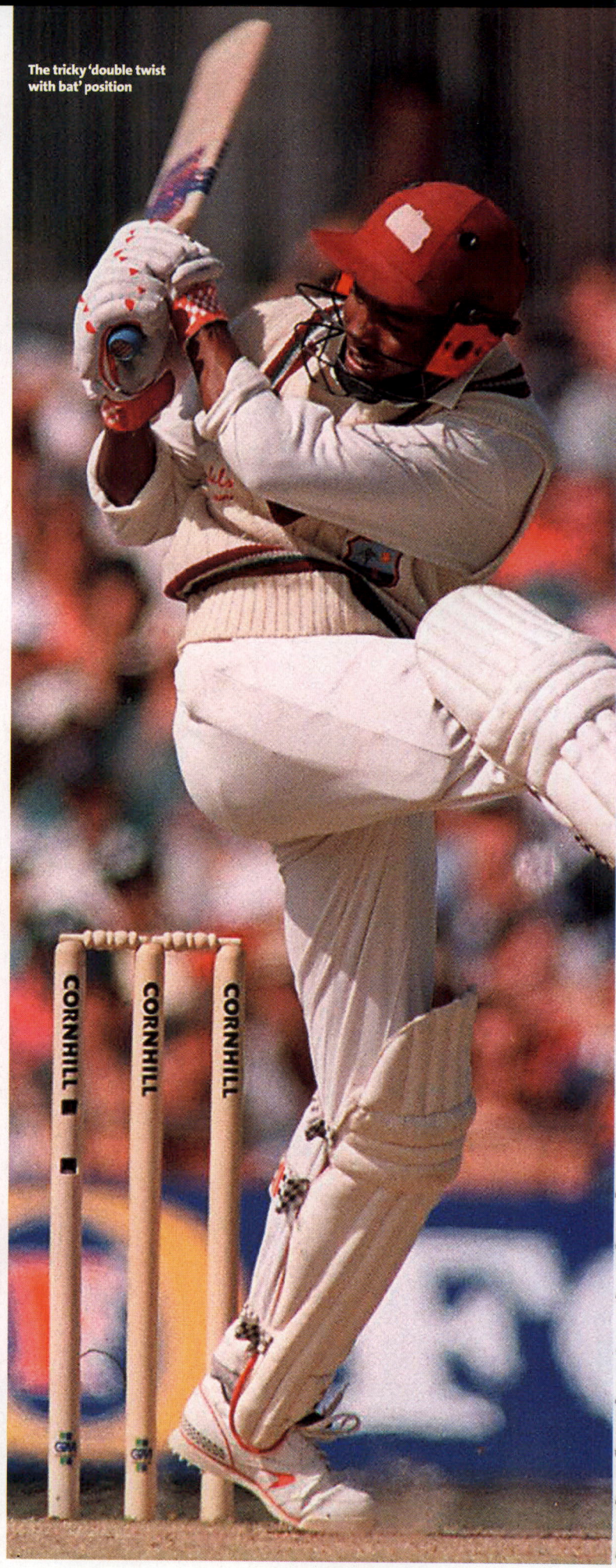
As one of the *Guardian*'s 'Unlimited' series of sites this has an excellent

CRICKET EXPLAINED

HOWZAT!

You have two sides, one out in the field and one in. Each man that's in the side that's in goes out, and when he's out he comes in and the next man goes in until he's out. When they are all out, the side that's out comes in and the side that's been in goes out and tries to get those coming in, out. Sometimes men are in and... oh go to ***lmu.uce.ac.uk/lmu/esu/cricket.htm*** and it'll tell you the rules.

Put an 'X' over the future PM



The tricky 'double twist with bat' position

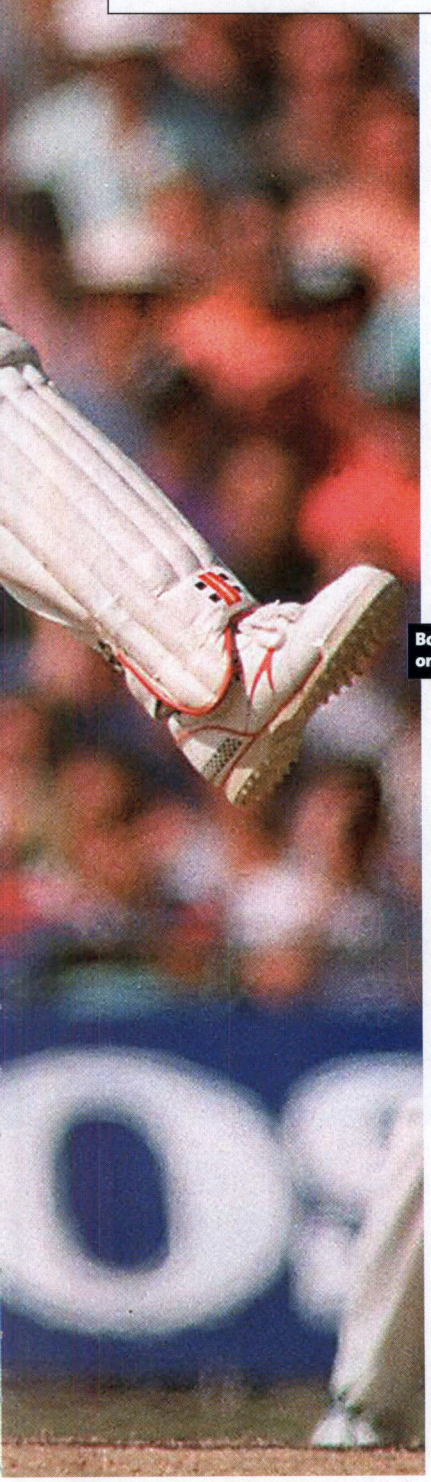
WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW; PICTURES: EMPICS, REX

CricInfo

www.cricinfo.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Well, admittedly, when you first log on to CricInfo it's about as attractive as Shane Warne, but like the fat blond Australian spin maestro there's something special behind the façade. With Warne it's outrageously talented bowling, and with CricInfo it's reports on what seems like every game taking place on the planet, plus there are chat rooms, games, live coverage, a shop, pictures, statistics... hang on, I'm going on as long as Geoff Boycott. Suffice to say this is as comprehensive as it gets.



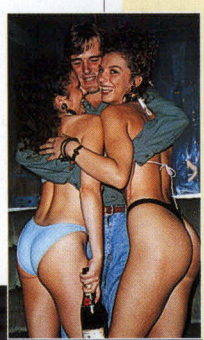
news service and also a slightly irreverent way of looking at the game, offering you something a bit different from the stat-laden sites about the sport. The columns make compelling reading and offer a focus on the issues within the game – rather than a list of who's beating who and who's scoring the most runs.

Cricmania

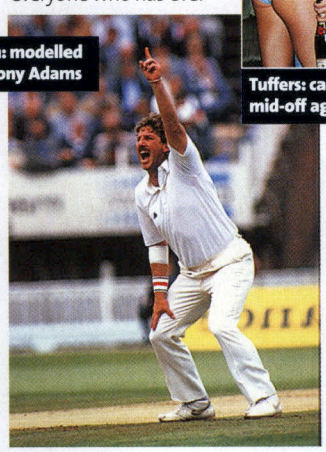
www.cricmania.com

★★★

Anyone who has ever been the scorer at a cricket game knows the sport is a statto's paradise – and this site proves the point. The fantastically comprehensive profiles of everyone who has ever played international cricket are the highlight and there are scorecards from every one-day game played.



Tuffers: caught at silly mid-off again



Both: modelled on Tony Adams

Lord's

www.lords.org ★★★★

Although it may at first appear as inspiring as the English Test results over the last 10 years, there's so much content within this site it'll keep true cricket fans intrigued for longer than the average Test match. There's information and statistics about everything from Test cricket to the women's game, and an overview of the rules for our American cousins.

best sport sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND THE LATEST NEWS AND SCORES?

espn.go.com
Sports scores galore, with a US bias.
www.sportlive.net
Express site with news and info.
www.soccernet.com
Scoreflashes from all UK games.
www.sporting-life.com
News, scores and betting advice.

FIND TOP FOOTBALL SITES?

www.football 365.com
Humour, news and plenty of features.
www.one football.com
Live scores and news from Europe.
www.teamtalk.com
Major club news.
www.soccer-links.com
Well-organised and searchable set of links for world sites.
www.broadcast.com/sports/soccer
A variety of teams in RealAudio.

FIND THE BEST SITES FOR POPULAR SPORTS?

www.tennis.com
Does for tennis what Cricinfo does for cricket.
www.planet-rugby.com
Find everything oval-balled here.
www.golfalot.com
For the fan and player alike.

Traverse the virtual greens with golfalot.com

www.boxingonline.com
The online king of the ring.

PLACE AN ONLINE BET?

www.bluesq.com
Best-known and easiest-to-use online bookie.
www.victorchandler.com
User-friendly site from the traditional bookmakers.
www.sporting index.com
The biggest spread-betting site on the Net.
www.vipsports.com
New gambling site covering a variety of sports across the world.

FOLLOW EVENTS LIVE?

www.planetfootball.com
Hub site for English football clubs' audio broadcasts.
www.sportlist.com
Guide to every sports show on British TV.
www.talksport.net
Listen to the national radio station's sports coverage live.

FIND FIXTURES?

www.sportcal.co.uk/public/online.htm
Comprehensive list of events and sponsors for five years.
www.pa.press.net/sport/calendar
Useful sporting guide for the forthcoming year.
www.sportlive.net
Join here for your own email sports diary.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

rec.sport.tennis
The definitive tennis newsgroup – join up to become of the fraternity.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Hop aboard the Martina Hingis Electronic Fan Club at
members.xoom.om/hingis_fan

GET CHATTING?

www.tennisw.com/chat.html
Whether you play or watch or do a bit of both, talk tennis here.

Lord's: not as dull as you might think

Pricewaterhouse-Coopers Cricket Ratings

www.pwcglobal.com/uk/eng/ins-sol/spec-int/cricket ★★

Don't even try to think about how they work out the ratings, but this is supposedly the best guide to who are the greatest cricketers today. It's extremely convoluted, but it might help sort arguments. Interesting to see Hansie Cronje's still included.

Wisden

www.wisden.com ★★★

Strictly speaking this is an extension of Cricket Unlimited, but the bible of the game deserves its own place. The Wisden almanac has been around longer than the Queen Mum, and the Wisden records alone are enough to pass away any rained-off day.

England's new betting order

BLUE SQ

bluesq.com

Simply click on bluesq.com to place your bet

Rules apply – See www.bluesq.com Over 18's only

The ad man in the crowd was quick to see a new medium

Skateboard.com

www.skateboard.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Skateboarders spend most of their time moaning about the lack of skate parks, watching videos of people who are a lot better than themselves at it, raving about their new board or making a fantastic job of falling off it. This site provides for all that and more, so whether you're a permanently cut-and-grazed beginner or a stylish expert, you'll be sorted here. It's even threatening to give away free Skateboard.com stickers. Wow.

Rad attitude

SKATEBOARDING Don't mind smashing your body to pieces on a plank with wheels? Then read on...

Birdhouse Skateboards

www.b-house.com ★★★★

If you want video clips of the very best boarders in action then this is the place to come. There's a huge archive of Tony Hawk *et al* pulling off outrageous moves that will impress even those who refuse to believe that this is a grown-up sport. But just imagine how many times they fell off before perfecting that little lot – ouch.

The Karate Kid easily took to wheels

EXPN

Expn.go.com ★★★★

EXPN covers the whole gamut of related sports such as BMX and surfing. The Skateboarding section teaches you how to pull off a few tricks, but not how to prevent injury before you perfect them. Full of the attitude that comes with the skateboarding territory and worth any boarder's time.

Skatenet UK

www.skatenetuk.co.uk ★★★

Skatenet is a clean, simply designed site offering the best of what skate fans want to see, ie loads of pics and video clips of mad people doing tricks on a plank of wood, nailed to four wheels. You can also choose from a selection of music tracks to chill with while you're enjoying the pages.

Javelins: easily avoided

Tony Hawk dot com

www.tonyhawk.com ★★

Tony Hawk is the skateboarding equivalent to ice hockey's Wayne Gretzky or American football's John Madden – ie he's got a computer game named after him, so he's the only one in his sport that anyone's heard of. Unfortunately, the site is merely a bunch of links to sites associated with the man, but it's still worth checking out.

best sports sites ★★★★★

where can I...

JOIN A TEAM?

www.sportlive.net
Check out the 'grass roots' section for links to hundreds of local teams.
www.intheteam.com
Build yourself a mini-site for your club, featuring news and fixtures.

BUY ACCESSORIES ONLINE?

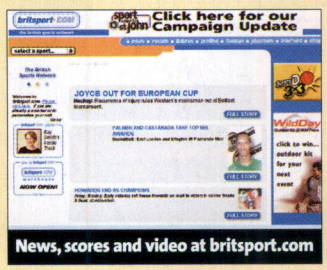
www.newitts.com
Great online sports store – whatever your sport, you'll find the kit here.
www.kitbag.com
The best place for new football kits and merchandise.

LEARN A MARTIAL ART?

www.blackbeltmag.com
Choose your fighting discipline then master the basics here.
www.kungfu.cc
Kung-fu course with handy online tutorials. Kicking!

LEARN THE RULES?

www-uk.cricket.org
Cricket's home page.
www.referee.com
You're certain to get your rule questions answered here.



News, scores and video at britsport.com

FIND A NEW SPORT?

www.sportszine.co.uk
Comprehensive links to UK sites, from athletics to wrestling.
www.britsport.com
Covers all the sports (cycling, hockey etc) that the bigger sites tend to overlook.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

rec.running
Plenty of advice on avoiding injuries while trying to get fit.

GET CHATTING?

www.4-lane.com/sportschat/
Boards for 20 popular sports – swap sporting prowess stories here.

Looking for more Sport sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: PAUL WINSLOW; PICTURES: NEALE HAYNES

As naked as nature intended

NUDISM Topless sunbathing is for wimps – so strip back to your birthday suit for your next holiday

Fergie and Andy loved to ski

Apollo Sun Club

freespace.virgin.net/martin.tricia/apollo/index.html ★★

Thanks to the marvel of global warming, stripping off during a British 'summer' is fast becoming a realistic proposition. So head on down to the Apollo naturist club in the heart of Sussex. There's boules, cream teas and, scarily, darts to keep you amused, plus a pig roast on 22 July. Only one question: why has nearly everyone on the home page kept their clothes on?

Calendar of Nude Running Events

www.cybernude.com/nuderuns ★★★

Who can claim they've never toyed with the idea of running a half-marathon buck nekkid? Okay, not many of us. But if you want to combine a holiday in the US with a jog in the buff (shoes optional), here's the site for you. And as the events are typically held in nudist resorts, there'll be no spectators to laugh at your flapping genitalia as you dash for the finishing line.

Dune 2000

www.dune.uk.com/flash.html ★★

The Flash-powered site of one of the UK's leading naturist holiday companies is beautifully designed, although low on content. You can browse across a range of nudist-friendly resorts, but there's no online booking form or price info. Even the gallery's still under construction. Shame.

Fantastic Voyages

members.tripod.com/~nudetours ★★★

There's a good selection of clothing-optional holidays available via this American site, plus resort info and a useful FAQ. What's a man to do if the parade of naked ladyflesh before him proves, er, a little too stimulating? 'Simply cover yourself with a towel, or turn over on your stomach until it passes'. Right.

Health and Efficiency

www.H-and-E.co.uk/reviews.htm ★★★★

Good old H&E has been sitting on newsagents' top shelves for 100 years – and now Britain's longest-running naturist magazine is on the Net. For a century, their fearless unclothed reporters have been investigating nudist resorts both here and abroad, and you can read their most recent reviews online. Or simply snigger at the dozens of flabby butts on show, as schoolboys have done for generations.

The Naturist Campguide

www.natuurlijk.com/uk/mainframe.htm ★★★

Camping? In the buff? What with pine needles and vicious tent pegs to hammer in, you'd think people would have more sense. But no, hardy

How do you focus these things?

Cap'n Barefoot's Naturist Guide

www.geocities.com/HotSprings/1794/greekgde.html ★★★★★

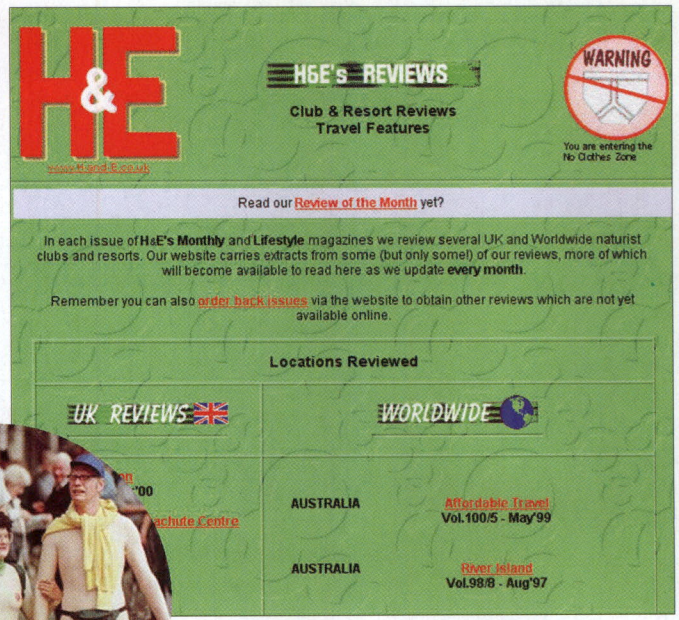
thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Unlike Bird's Eye or Ahab, this Cap'n doesn't go around hauling in the rich bounty of the ocean. No, Barefoot's after a bigger catch: the nudist-friendly beaches of Greece. It seems our laid-back Mediterranean cousins are happy to turn a blind eye to the occasional trunk-free bather, so Barefoot has collated beach reports from hundreds of sun-seeking naturists – complete with candid snapshots – then filed them away in his searchable 50-island database. What with the Cap'n's fine selection of Grecian and nudist links plus an FAQ, it's enough to make you take your clothes off.

'BIT PARKY IN HERE...'

'I'LL KEEP MINE ON, THANKS'

Naturists might be tough buggers, sailing yachts, running races and erecting windbreaks on Brighton beach without a care in the world. But if there's one place they won't travel to, it's the Ice Hotel at Jukkasjärvi, Lapland. Every winter, the Lapps sculpt a palace out of 30,000 tonnes of snow, then fill it with ice furniture and curious tourists. Enjoy an iced vodka at the bar before slipping out for a run with the huskies, then it's back for an uncomfortable night's sleep on a frozen bed covered in reindeer skins. If you're in luck (and the hotel full of warm-blooded guests), the temperature might even rise to –4°C. A snip at $102 per person per night (sharing) – book your stay at ***www.northerner.com/i_welcome.html***.



'Shepherds-Bush'

The nude gardener was popular

Go into the woods for a big surprise...

Dutch naturists have put together this fine guide to non-textile campsites the length and breadth of Europe, searchable by country or keyword. There are also a dozen form letters to campsite owners in different languages for you to print off, thus avoiding irritating grammatical errors. The one in English begins: 'We are interested in visiting your camping'.

Peng Travel

www.pengtravel.co.uk ★★★★

The smiling, bronzed bodies that greet you immediately mark this out as a commercial site. Peng have been packing nudists like this off on holiday for 29 years, and we're sure they take ugly people, too. Choose from resorts in eight countries, including Cap d'Agde in France – 'the world's only naturist town' – and download a booking form there and then.

Sail Nude

www.sailnude.com ★★

Make it past the array of John Thomases and butt-cheeks on display on the home page and you encounter a charter site for a classy yacht, the Endless Summer II, moored in the Caribbean. A cruise isn't cheap – around $3,250 per couple for a stateroom on a two-week jaunt – but you can be gloriously naked the entire time. The crew, however, appear to keep their clothes firmly on.

Tanpages

www.tanpages.com ★★

This is a self-described 'one-stop shopping center for those interested in naturist travel, naturist products and related services'. The search engine can be quite tricky to use, but it does throw up some wonderful non-requested information. For example, quite why 'Nude housecleaning (ask for Derek), Bracknell' popped up when searching for a nudist beach in Cornwall is beyond us...

best travel sites ★★★★★

where can I...

Share your trip with others – surf over to t-e.co.uk

FIND THE BEST HOLIDAY AND FLIGHT DEALS?

expedia.co.uk
Microsoft's flights and holidays site.
www.a2btravel.co.uk
Britain's biggest online travel agent.
www.thefirstresort.com
New online travel agent; good for family package holidays.
www.deckchair.com
Minimalist flight-finder from mop-haired Sir Bob Geldof.
www.travelocity.co.uk
Large holiday portal with competitive prices.

GET DESTINATION INFO?

www.t-e.co.uk
A great resource for travelogues, advice and guides.
www.roughguides.com
From the publishers of the guides.
www.utravel.co.uk
Good for finding out information on a resort before you book.

GET DOS AND DON'TS?

www.etravel.org
A neat and tidy online travel mag, with plenty of handy tips.
www.tips4trips.com
1,000 handy 'tips for trips', categorised for easy access.
www.fco.gov.uk/travel
Get the official word on countries before setting off – maybe you shouldn't even be going there.
www.travel-news.org
Good source of independent news for British travellers.

FIND ACCOMMODATION?

www.placestostay.com
Whether it's the Bahamas or Bangkok, this should find you a suitable place to rest.
www.cottage-net.ndirect.co.uk
Fancy an away-from-it-all country cottage? Then try this huge self-catering database.
www.smoothhound.co.uk
A guide to B&Bs and hotels across the whole of the UK.

SPEND A DAY OUT IN BRITAIN?

www.LondonTown.com/index2.html
Everything there is to do and see in the Big Smoke.
www.virgin.net/daysout
Great ideas and tips for days out throughout the UK, from those helpful people at Virgin.
www.knowhere.co.uk
A brutally honest guide to the boring towns and backwaters of Great Britain.
www.britainexpress.com
A jam-packed UK travel and heritage guide. Where to go, and lots of background info and articles on where you're going.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.rec.naturist
Swap info with other clothing avoidants near you.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Here's your chance – join the Nudism mailing list at
www.onelist.com/community/nudism

GET CHATTING?

www.travelchannel.com
Wherever you've been or wherever you're going, you can talk about it and share travel tips here.

Looking for more Travel sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 114

WORDS: MATTHEW BINGHAM; PICTURES: KOBAL, REX, PA

Join the Dots .

.lu .ch .ro .nu .it .at .org .co.nz .co.za .uk.net .uk.com .eu.com .co.uk .gb.com .gb.net .org.uk .net .com

Be part of the bigger picture

Every new life starts with a carefully chosen name and your on-line business shouldn't be any different. With a wealth of domain name possibilities we have the experience to guide you through the .com maze and help you to realize the branding of your website.

Details of our professional UK and International domain name registration services, together with concise advice and clear pricing policies are available online at **www.simplynames.co.uk**

simplynames

www.simplynames.co.uk

Zone One, Malvern Hills Science Park,
Malvern Worcestershire, WR14 3SZ - England
Tel: 01684 893020
e-mail: domains@simplynames.co.uk

Strip shows

COMICS Now you can catch up with your favourite 'toons online

Calvin and Hobbes' Desktop Invasion Home Base

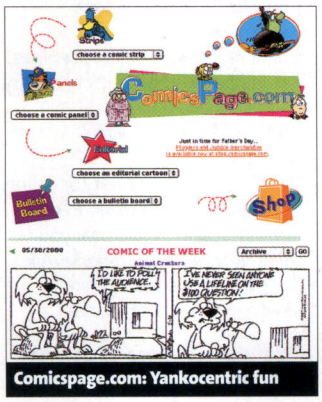
www.eng.buffalo.edu/~clau/CalvinandHobbes/index.html ★★★

...from which a pop-up window emerges, displaying a new Calvin and Hobbes strip every minute. A delightful waste of time if you're fond of the insightful six-year-old Calvin and his tiger playmate Hobbes. Both were named after philosophers, but the artist's deep-thinking manner caused problems when he tried to break free of the strip format (see the site for the full story).

ComicsPage.com

www.comicspage.com ★★★★

A good site in its own right, the Comics Page suffers in comparison to the similar, but larger, comics.com. Here you'll find 19 generally less well-known cartoons, although there are still famous characters like Dick Tracy and the inexhaustible Fred Basset. If you're feeling politicised you can also view some editorial cartoons, which are good but – inevitably – Yankocentric.



Comicspage.com: Yankocentric fun

Creators.com

www.creators.com/comics ★★★

The Web site of the world's third-largest syndicate is perhaps surprisingly bereft of quantity, but there's still quality in the two dozen-plus strips to choose from here, with timeless favourites like Andy Capp, Archie, BC and The Wizard of Id lining up alongside more recent flavours like Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles and Rug Rats in the searchable archive.

The Official Beano Comic Site

www.beano.co.uk ★★★

Relive the days of your youth with the suitably colourful Beano site,

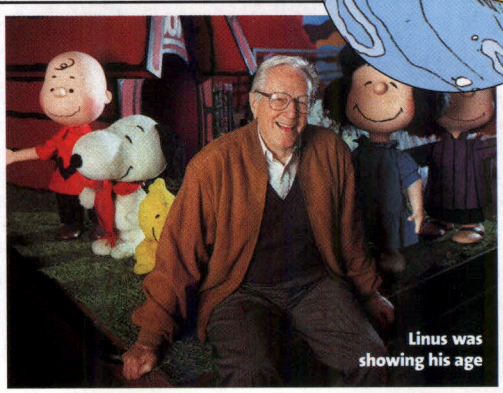
home to Dennis the Menace, Roger the Dodger, Minnie the Minx (can you see a pattern here?) and the Bash Street Kids. There are a few gadgets and games, including a Menacing twist on scissors/paper/stone, but, crucially, no strips: you'll just have to take up one

Comics.com

www.comics.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Your first stop, whatever you're after. This huge site is run by big-daddy-rabbit syndicators United Media, responsible for many funnies pages worldwide, and as a result there are 100 heavyweights here: Andy Capp, BC, Dilbert, Doonesbury, Garfield, Heathcliff, Herman, Marmaduke and, of course, Peanuts. Interestingly, the 'Tributes to a Friend' honours the recently deceased Snoopy creator Charles M Schulz by collating Peanuts-flavoured strips from over 70 different comic artists. It's oddly confusing to see Garfield on Snoopy's kennel.


Linus was showing his age

Gay wrapping couldn't disguise the collars for Snoopy's birthday

WORDS: GARY PARKINSON; PICTURES: KOBAL, REX, LIAISON

With Geri gone the Spices took on a new image

of the numerous subscription offers.

Red Meat

www.redmeat.com

★★★★★

Describing itself as 'Comedy's malformed twin', Max Cannon's weekly strip features a variety of unsettling characters like Bug-eyed Earl, pipe-smoking Ted and Johnny Lemonhead in pared-down, deconstructed comedy. The site as a whole is excellently laid out, but the centrepiece is the huge Meat Locker archive with hundreds of episodes lined up for your perusal.

Roy of the Rovers.com

www.royoftherovers.com ★★★★

Signing for Melchester Rovers as a 15-year-old in 1954, Roy kept playing until 1993, going into a coma and losing a foot after a helicopter crash finally stopped his gallop. For a while the flaxen-haired striker disappeared, but he's now been resurrected as Melchester manager; this site chronicles his adventures down the years.

Salon.com comics

www.salon.com/comics/index.html

★★★★

The satirical San Franciscan Salon site attracts millions of readers and therefore millions of dollars in revenue; the debate is ongoing about whether this waters down the political content, but the cartoons are some of the best left-field stuff around. Each weekday sees an update of one of the weekly strips, including Tom Tomorrow's excellent 'This Modern World'.

UExpress Online – Comics Features

www.uexpress.com/ups/comics/index.html ★★★

There isn't the widest range of chuckles here – although the total of 20 different strips and eight panels is laudable enough. The great thing this site has in its favour if you're a fan of Calvin and Hobbes, Doonesbury, Garfield and so on, is that you can email any of them to similarly-amused chums.

Viz

www.viz.co.uk ★★★★

'This site is not for children' says the front page and, like the print version, that's fair enough: kids would never appreciate the subtle humour within (oh alright, or the downloadable 'Lesbian Tennis' game). Frame-a-page tasters for the new issue take a while to read, but there's fun to be had with Letters, Top Tips, Roger's Profanisaurus, the Crypt of Crap...

Viz: anyone for mixed doubles?

best news sites ★★★★★

where can I...

RECEIVE NEWS?

www.thisislondon.co.uk

Capital-based breaking news from the *Evening Standard*.

pa.press.net

Vast array of news-related services, including a desktop ticker and diary.

FIND LOCAL NEWS?

www.thisis.co.uk

Add the name of your city or county (eg ***www.thisisessex.co.uk***) to get news, chat and events near you.

www.ecola.com/news/press/eu/uk

Directory of online UK regional newspapers and magazines.

GET AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE?

www.reuters.com/news

The massive news agency provides rolling headlines and news by topic.

www.cnn.com

From the channel of the same name comes a comprehensive service with audio and video.

COMPILE MY OWN NEWS PAGES?

www.crayon.net

Aka 'Create Your Own Newspaper'. Build a daily digest of headlines.

my.yahoo.com

Personalise a Yahoo! page to get the news you want when you want it.

GET A DIFFERENT SPIN?

www.drudgereport.com

Notorious American columnist who broke the Clinton scandal – and quite a lot more besides.

www.thesmokinggun.com

A variety of material from US government and law enforcement sources. Quirky.

FIND WEATHER & TRAVEL?

www.wunderground.com

It lists current conditions and a forecast for any location, anywhere, in colour.

www.theaa.co.uk/motoring/ukroads/traffic.asp

Roadworks, road closures and delays all over the country.

JOIN A NEWSGROUP?

rec.arts.comics.misc

An opportunity to swap cartoon gossip here.

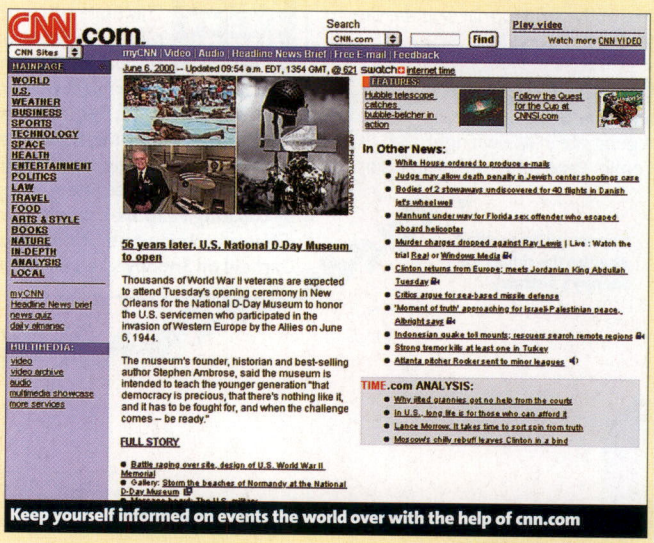
FIND A MAILING LIST?

Try ***www.itn.co.uk/desktopnews/webpage/preferences.htm*** for some daily news.

GET CHATTING?

www.news.bbc.co.uk

Head for the 'Talking Point'...



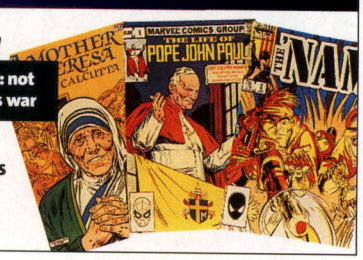
Keep yourself informed on events the world over with the help of cnn.com

Looking for more News sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

COMIC AID

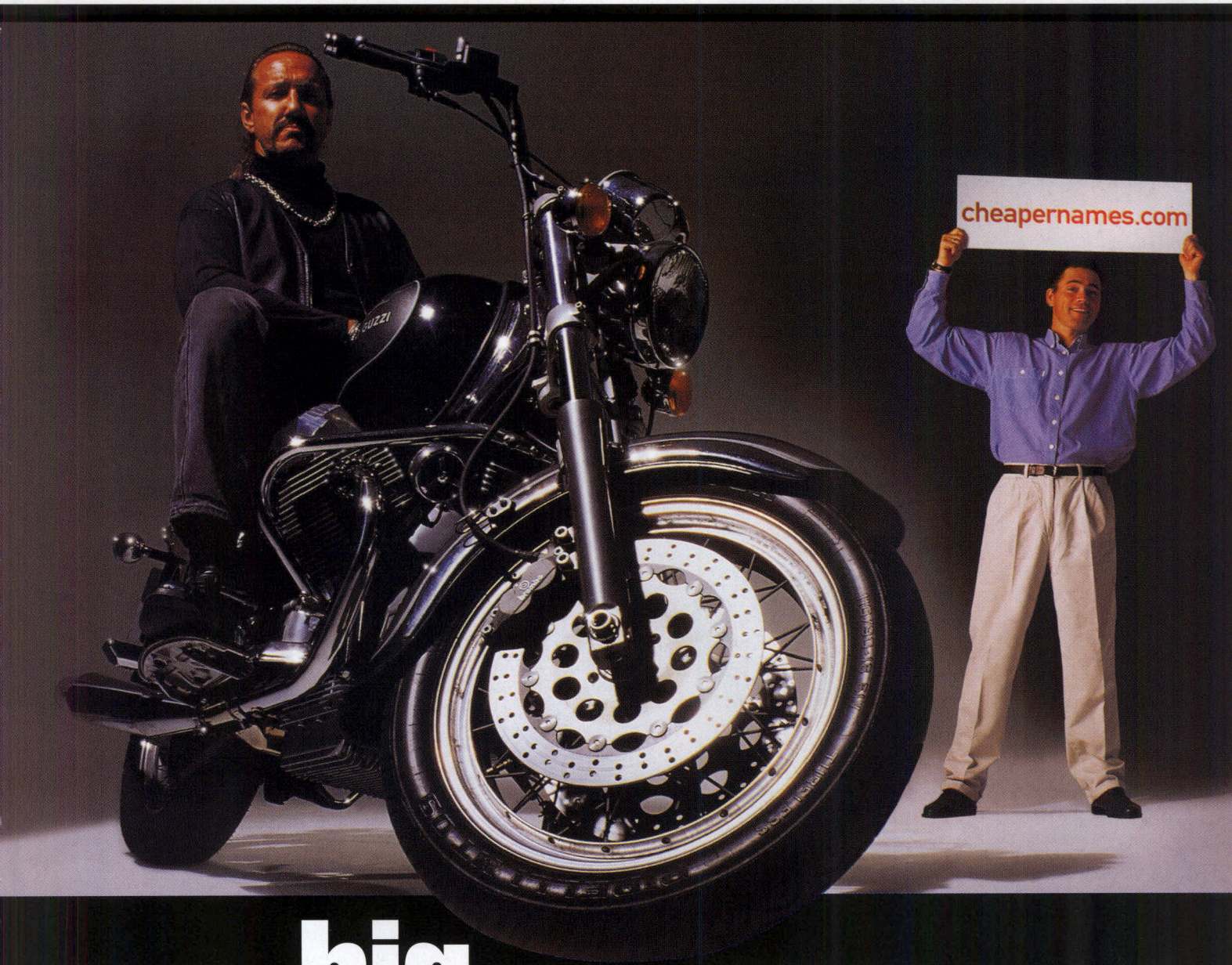
HOW TO BE TOP DRAWER

So you're one of those kids whose favourite programme was *Vision On*, *Rolf's Cartoon Club* or *Art Attack*. And you've seen the sites and thought you could do better. For Net help, the Amateur and Professional Cartoonists Association (*perower.tripod.com/index.html*) counsels caution but provides a list of visual ideas; The Cartoonists' Ring (*www.thecartoonist.com/ringhome.htm*) offers support; or chat with chums at *www.cartoonsforum.com/Talk/TTGate.ssi*. Successful? Then go to *www.comicon.com* – a huge online convention.



Religion: not as fun as war

the world's lowest cost domain names



this is big bill

who comes with every "free" domain name...

this is little bill

from Cheapernames

.co.uk

£8.50 including VAT

.com

£33 including VAT

- No strings attached.
- Your domain name registered in your name, not anyone else's!
- Backed by the world's largest UK registrar established in 1996.
- Change your e-mail and web forwarding settings 24 hours a day using our web based control panel.
- Free e-mail and cloaked web forwarding.
- Account manager for volume buyers.
- Business web space from £49pa.
- 250mb space including free domain: £100pa.

cheaper names .com
the world's lowest cost domain names

THE WORLD'S LOWEST COST DOMAIN NAMES

www.cheapernames.com

IT'S MY CHOICE

more music Supported by thomson-music.com you'll have access to thousands of free tracks, software upgrades and the latest music news. Fully upgradeable so you won't be left behind by new digital formats. **more memory** 64mb CompactFlash memory card holds up to 2 hrs of digital quality audio. Store 10 x as much with an additional CompactFlash card. **more formats** Plays MP3 and RealAudio G2. **more stuff** Everything you need to download and transfer digital music files: CompactFlash memory card, CompactFlash reader/writer, Realjukebox™ music management software, headphones, cables and batteries. **more rugged** Lyra has no moving parts so it's completely skip-free **more personal** Create your own music library by downloading digital audio files or converting your cd or md collection.

Tel: 01732 520970
www.thomson-lyra.com
www.thomson-music.com

THOMSON

'Spare the price of a cuppa, guv'

FUNDRAISING You could be a millionaire – if only you could raise the cash to get your idea off the ground...

British Venture Capital Association

www.bvca.co.uk ★★★

Apparently, the UK accounts for 49 percent of total annual venture capital expenditure in Europe, making it second-only to the US in world importance. Want some real figures? Well, the UK venture capital industry has spent over £35 billion on 19,000 companies in the last 17 years. (I'll have some of that, please). The BVCA's no-nonsense Web site tells you how to get your hands on some of that lovely lucre from the 250 plus member companies who're just dying to throw money at you – if you have the right idea, that is.

'One just loves the sound of a mandolin'

Fundraising.co.uk

www.fundraising.co.uk ★★★

Although aimed primarily at charities looking to raise funds from UK businesses, this site is still packed with useful information for artists, entrepreneurs, students, explorers, budding sports stars and more. If you need a leg-up to chase your ambitions, a good starting point is the UK page under 'Grants and Funding' – you'll find it on the left-hand menu; here is a fairly exhaustive list of organisations with deep pockets.

The Arts Council

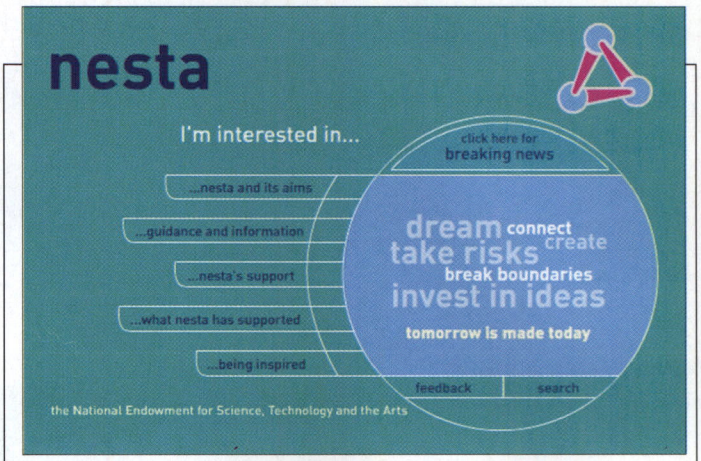
www.artscouncil.org.uk ★★★★

Whether you want to pickle farm animals in formaldehyde or take time out to write an experimental symphony, the Arts Council's smooth and stylish Web site is definitely the first port of call for threadbare artists of every imaginable inclination. Packed with ideas, inspiration, and funding advice, this excellent site gives you the low-down on how to apply for lottery handouts or grants from regional arts boards – drop by and don't ignore your muse a minute longer.

The Prince's Trust

www.princes-trust.org.uk ★★★

If you're 18-30, want to gain new skills, start a business or improve your woeful life, then click on the drop down menu and Charlie'll Fix It. The aims of the Trust are to help young people improve their qualifications, boost their confidence and get a job. If you're a budding entrepreneur, but the bank manager falls about laughing when you ask him for dosh, then try the Prince's Trust instead. Drop by the site to find out more, and visit the Ideas Exchange to chat with those lucky, lucky people who've already benefited from the scheme.



The National Endowment for Science, Technology and Arts

www.nesta.org.uk/home.html ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Founded last year with a whopping £200m of lottery money, NESTA is allowed to spend the interest on projects that promote science, technology and the arts in the UK – or preferably all three at the same time. The first grants and fellowships, totalling £24m, were awarded in May to an inventor developing a boat that can drive on land, a poet who wants to spend time experimenting with free verse, and 22 other lucky recipients (obviously one criteria for winning is the idea's relevance to real life). But this is an awesome Web site: fast, cool and flash-powered. It's packed with information to help inventors and innovators, and applications for funds are accepted online all year round.

best money sites ★★★★★

where can I...

LEARN ABOUT INVESTING?

www.citywire.co.uk
Company news and advice.
www.fool.co.uk
Advice for the learner investor.
www.askfigaro.com
Compares financial products' results.

GET FINANCIAL ANALYSIS?

www.invweek.co.uk
Advice from *Investment Week*.
www.eye4money.com
UK and US financial information – plus a share simulation game.
www.hemscott.com
Get access to a veritable mine of analysis.

GET MONEY NEWS AND SHARE PRICES?

www.ft.com
This is the mother of all money sites.
www.bloomberg.co.uk
Up-to-date data for professionals.
www.sharepages.com
News from all markets.

TRADE SHARES?

www.stocktrade.co.uk
This site offers real-time prices.
www.barclays-stockbrokers.co.uk
Another option for real-time share dealing.
www.forex-cmc.co.uk
First online foreign-exchange dealer.

SORT OUT MY FINANCES?

www.iii.co.uk
Advice for individual investors.
www.moneyunlimited.co.uk
Financial advice from *The Guardian*.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

uk.finance
Advice on a whole variety of topics.

GET CHATTING?

investor.msn.com
Chat with other online finance fans around the world.

Looking for more Money sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

'Please Sir, can I have some more money?'

WORDS: CHRIS HADLEY; PICTURES: PA

“Your matching was right on! We were the number one match for each other on Udate and it seems in real life too.”

“I have been with Udate for less than a month and already have too many women to write to and meet.”

“I'm happy to tell you I have met the man of my dreams.”

“Thank you Udate for helping to make this happen... I have met my soulmate after searching for years.”

(they just clicked)

It's easy to make friends or build relationships with udate. Our sophisticated matching system and extensive membership database provides more choice, more places, more fun. And because you have total 'on-line' control, you can build the relationship you want at your own pace. To find out more go to www.udate.co.uk and click now.

udate.co.uk

The uk's largest global internet dating service

Have you done your chores?

HOUSEHOLD TASKS The Net can't make the ironing go away, but it can make it a bit less painful

Martha Stewart Living

www.marthastewart.com ★★★★

America's housewives have relied on Martha Stewart's homespun common sense for decades: the undisputed queen of domesticity doles out advice on entertaining, cleaning and creating via her magazine, TV and radio shows and now this site. If you're really lucky, you might spot Martha herself in the chat room...

The New Homemaker

www.newhomemaker.com ★★★

Remember the *Dairy Book Of Home Management* your mum almost certainly owned (once edited by Pet Shop Boy Neil Tennant, fact fans)? Well, such old-fashioned house-keeping sentiments didn't die with the advent of the Net; instead, this compendium of household tips will keep the domestically-minded happy for hours. And, after reading through the site, why not join such scintillating forums as 'Cleaning stainless steel sinks'?

The early Shake 'n' Vac auditions were a mixed bag

How To Clean Anything.com

www.howtocleananything.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

A site so specific in its aims that it makes the Ronseal Woodstain adverts look hilariously vague, Howtocleananything is a huge compendium of stain-removing tips – which makes it an essential bookmark for the messy homeowner. And it's not just curtains and cushions, either: cars, chandeliers and even cats ('be sure to clear the area of any breakable items') are covered, too. With a glossary, 'Ask a Pro' section and reviews of the latest cleaning products, you'll never encounter a stain too stubborn to shift again.

best home sites ★★★★★ where can I...

LEARN HOW TO TALK TO A REPAIR MAN?

www.misterfixit.com

Look up your jobs here and be prepared for even the most John Wayne-like of repairpersons.

www.naturalhandyman.com

A site that looks after the 'little guy'.

Get some garden ideas from the experts at e-garden.co.uk

FIND DIY ADVICE?

www.remodelonline.com

An A-Z of home improvement tips. There's something for everyone here.

www.doityourself.com

Claims to be the original Internet community for DIYers. There are others now, but it's still good.

GET SOME INSPIRATION?

www.british-bathrooms.org.uk

Planner and product finder and useful fact sheets lead you to that dream bathroom.

www.homebase.co.uk

Well-designed site that offers makeover ideas – plus store info, of course.

GET GARDEN IDEAS?

www.crocus.co.uk

A vast online garden centre, with products and design service too.

www.e-garden.co.uk

Well-written articles on all kinds of gardening topics.

BUILD MY DREAM HOME?

www.cdw.com

Search under 'home design' and find a wide variety of packages.

www.bhg.com/homeplan

Search for plans that match your needs; features online price guide.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.home.repair

For everything and anything to do with home improvement.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

For a feast of home repair help, encouragement and humour, email

subscribe@naturalhandyman.com

GET CHATTING?

communities.msn.com/homegarden/chat.asp Go on, you know you want to – exchange tips with those like-minded DIYers to your heart's content.

Looking for more Homes sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

Mrs Shiva kept a tidy house

Organized home.com

Organizedhome.com ★★★★

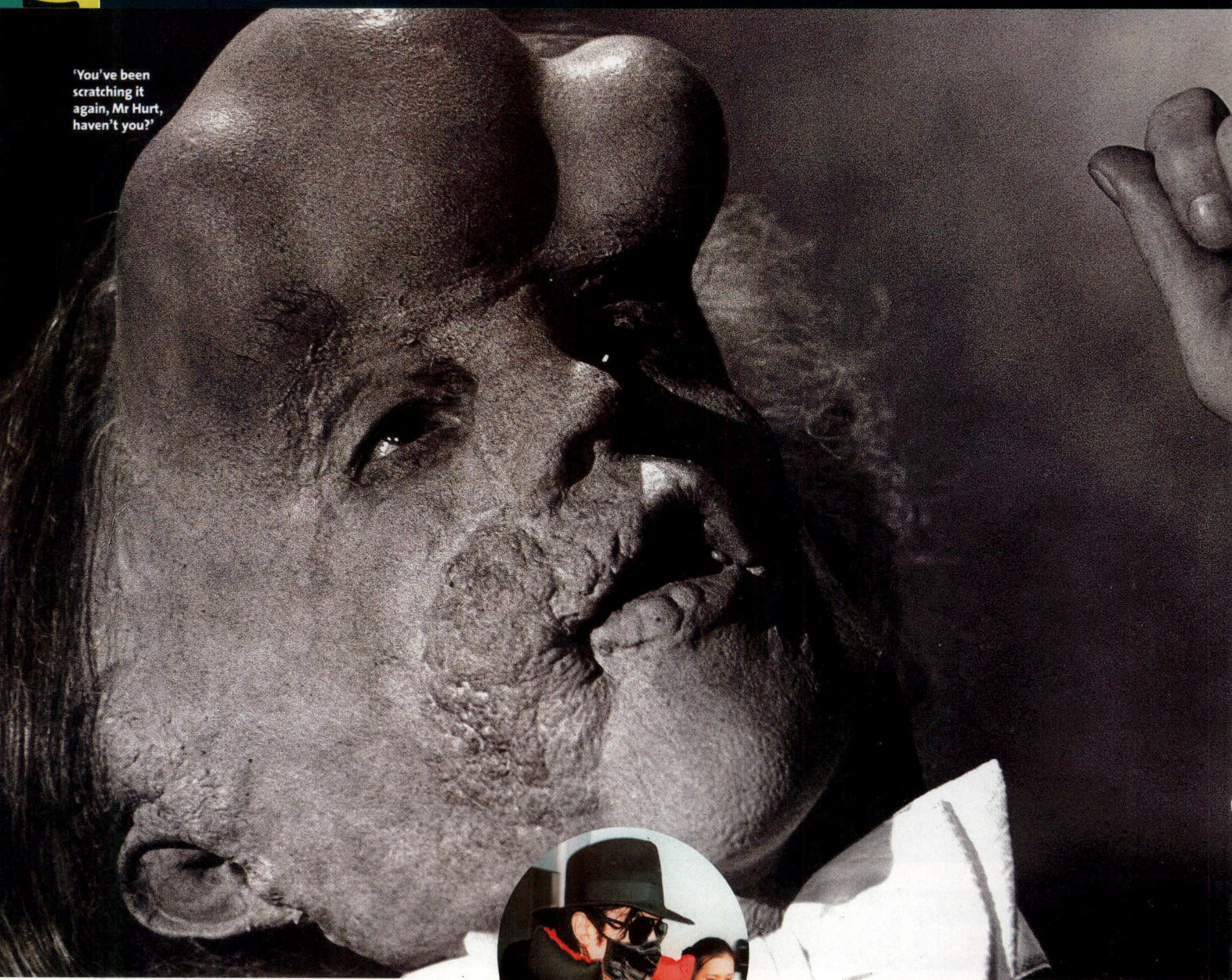
If you're someone who actually takes pride in your proficiency at household tasks your peers would consider spirit-sappingly boring, you'll just love this. Obsessives swap cleaning tips and read 'Spring Cleaning Chore Checklists', before spending all day with a feather duster in their hands. Intriguing, in a socio-logical kind of way.

This To That

www.thistothat.com ★★★

Glue – that's the name of the game here. You might have thought the business of attaching one material to another was a simple one – but you'd be wrong. At This To That, you choose the material you want to stick (and the one you want to stick it to) and the site tells you the substance you need to do the sticking. And that's it. As it says here: 'people have a need to glue things to other things'.

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; PICTURES: LONDON FEATURES, REX



'You've been scratching it again, Mr Hurt, haven't you?'

'Don't worry, it's just a rash'

SKINCARE Still think moisturisers are for girls? Just look at what could happen if you don't take care...

American Academy of Dermatology

www.aad.org ★★★★

Aimed at both doctors and patients, this is a clearly written and laid-out professional site (ie no pics of disfigurements). There's a multitude of handy tips in Skin Savvy, where you can choose from Melanoma Monday, Atopic Dermatitis: Ditch the Itch! and Sports Shorts (don't even go there).

Cellulite UK

www.celluliteuk.co.uk ★★

This is the stuff of dreams. 'Beat cellulite without exercise, without surgery, without liposuction, without stress and' – magnificently – 'effort'. And how does this miracle cream actually work? Without divulging too many secrets, the main constituent appears to be hydrolised egg – that well-known cellulite fighter. Elsewhere there are testimonials to the miraculous cream, from authorities such as Dr Pervian (who notes its amazing 'youthenizing' effect on the skin).

Eve Lom

www.evelom.co.uk ★★★

Eve Lom is a skincare guru, revered by professionals and the paying public alike. In what will appeal to those with a sloth-like nature who don't cleanse before bedtime each night, Eve recommends the minimalist regime. Be warned though, your idea of minimalism is probably quite different to Eve's 'seven-step' cleansing process.

Age took its toll on Langford

Island Trading Discount Cosmetics

www.island-trading.com ★★★★

For cosmetic junkies who can easily spend the equivalent of Chile's annual GDP on a few facial products in one month, finding a place that sells discount, brand-name goods would be rather nice. Step forward, Island Trading. An extensive range of make-up – including Bobbi Brown, Estee Lauder and Hard Candy – is available, with varying discounts (£10 off Elizabeth Arden eye cream for example); the site also sells perfume and hair products. Even better, the delivery is free.

Lush Online

www.lush.co.uk ★★★

Pamper yourself courtesy of these rather, er, lush products. The Lush online emporium has all the choice that you'd find in the high street shop, together with the fun layout – but without the olfactory assault. Choose from products with names such as 'Truly Madly Veggie' soap, or 'Butterball' bath ballistic. Go on, treat yourself.

WORDS: CLAIRE MCHATTIE; PICTURES: KOBAL, PA

best health sites ★★★★★

where can I...

GET AN ONLINE DIAGNOSIS?

www.intelihealth.com
A full and frank site to help solve your problems.
www.mayo.edu
Confess your fears to the resident doctor and have them put to rest.
www.quackwatch.com
Shows how to heal naturally.
www.pathfinder.com/drweil
The most celebrated online doctor.

LOSE SOME WEIGHT?

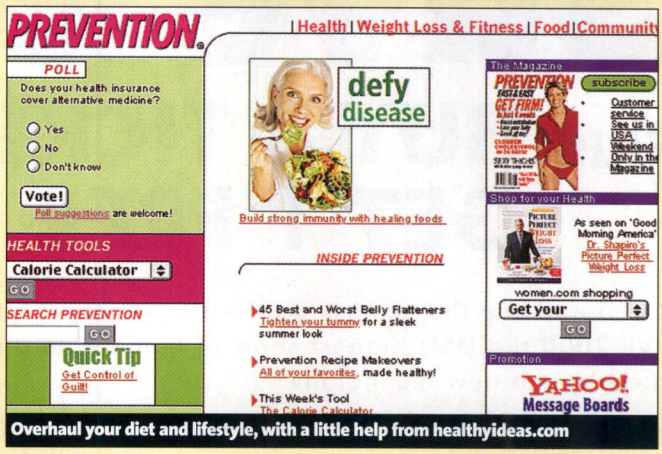
uk.weightwatchers.com
Find out how to shed extra pounds.
www.3fatchicks.com
Recipes and nutritional information.
www.fitnessonline.com
Plan a low-calorie fitness regime.
www.healthyideas.com
Rate your present exercise regime.

CHECK OUT A HEALTH CONTROVERSY?

www.viagra.com
Information on *that* drug.
www.bpas.demon.co.uk
British Pregnancy Advisory Service deals with all sorts of questions.
www.monsanto.co.uk
The GM company defends itself.
www.baps.co.uk
The lowdown on cosmetic surgery.

FIND AN OFFICIAL HEALTH SITE?

www.doh.gov.uk/nhs exec/direct.htm
How to get help via NHS Direct.



Overhaul your diet and lifestyle, with a little help from healthyideas.com

www.bma.org.uk
Info on how to become a doctor.
www.dentalhealth.org.uk
Dentistry queries answered online.
www.bupa.co.uk
Get some private healthcare.

TRY AN ALTERNATIVE?

www.altguide.com
Find an alternative therapist.
www.homeopathyhome.com
A search engine, a library, chats...
www.evonline.net
Yoga questions answered.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.skincare
For those too hideously disfigured to leave the house.

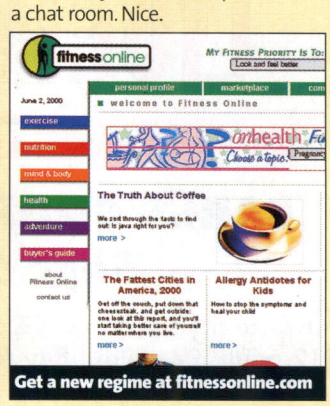
Before and after

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Get on the healing and meditation list at ***www.harmony land.com/healing_net_mailing_list.htm*** and get better naturally.

GET CHATTING?

www.docsonline.com
Proper, qualified physicians on hand to answer your medical questions in a chat room. Nice.



Get a new regime at fitnessonline.com

Thinknatural

www.thinknatural.com ★★★★★

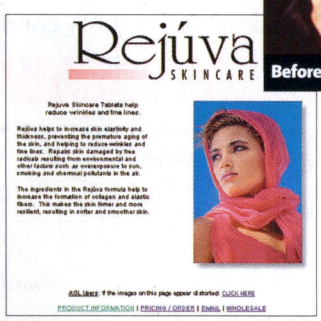
thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

What goes inside shows on the outside, so if your daily diet consists of four Toffee Crisps and 20 B&H, washed down by a bottle of Blue Nun, you won't be surprised that your skin isn't exactly glowing. If, however, you embrace the path of righteousness, this is the site for you and if your body needs it, you can buy it here. A huge amount of info – all very worthy and good for you, but is it any *fun*?

Medical Images & Illustrations

www.mic.ki.se/Medimages.html#dermatol ★★

A jolly little compendium of photos to cheer up your day. This Web site contains a large selection of shots of various skin conditions, at varying degrees of nastiness. Ever wondered what gonorrhea ankle looks like, for instance? Then this is your lucky day. And if you're still not convinced about using high-factor suntan lotion when sunbathing, let these pictures of melanomas be a warning to you.



Rejúva Skincare

www.rejuva-skincare.com ★★

A wrinkle reducer in a pill. Just two tablets taken daily will 'increase skin elasticity and thickness...'. It's yours for $19.95. If you have any doubts as to the product's excellence, a quick perusal of the list of ingredients should allay any fears – and most impressively, these ingredients are 'connective tissue specific'.

The Sher System

www.sher.co.uk ★★★★

No, this Web site has nothing to do with plastic surgery. It belongs instead to the guru of skin science, Helen Sher, and her recipe for healthy and young looking skin. Indeed, if Helen's skin is anything to go by, get yourself here, pronto. And her proven formula for problem skin? Plain old water – and plenty of it. Learn to swim with the best at this clear and easy-to-use site.

SUN, SEA, SAND AND SURGERY

THAI TUCKS

Still not achieved the desired effect, even with your new regime, then what about plastic surgery? The Phuket Center (*www.phuket-plasticsurgery.com*) extols you to pop in for some surgery when you're on holiday in Thailand, performed by Dr Sanguan Kunaporn. And if you want a really radical change, you might be interested to know that Dr Kunaporn has some 1000 sex changes under his belt. Go on, treat yourself on holiday...

Sun Wellness

www.sunwellnessmag.com ★★

This site worships at the shrine of the god of Sun. It takes the subject very seriously indeed – and you soon learn that the process of acquiring a tan requires an amount of dedication not unfamiliar, say, to an athlete preparing for the Olympics. Bear in mind that this is very much a pro tan position – no essays on the dangers of sun exposure here, thank-you very much, hence the repeated oxymoron 'healthy tan'.

Find what you want on the Web

thenet

Advance Ticket Offer

Save £4

Plus BUY 4 TICKETS GET 1 FREE

Come and see the experts on the **thenet** stand at LIVE 2000 the UK's biggest show of home enteraiment, internet and new technology.

All the top brands, all the latest products, all in one place.

See them, touch them, hear them, try them at LIVE 2000.

So make it a date. Kit Live xxx

LIVE 2000 EVENT

AUDIO · DVD · DIGITAL · GAMES · INTERNET · MOBILES

EARLS COURT, LONDON
Sept 21-24

Advance tickets for just £8 adult, £4 child (on the door price £12 adult, £7 child). ***Buy four adult tickets and get one free***

Call the Box Office now 0870 736 2000 and quote **thenet** readers offer.

Or complete and return the order form to LIVE 2000 Box Office, PO Box 111, London, HA9 0YH

thenet readers offer. ORDER FORM

TICKET DETAILS

	Number of tickets		
Thursday 21 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£
		child ticket @ £4 each	£
Friday 22 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£
		child ticket @ £4 each	£
Saturday 23 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£
		child ticket @ £4 each	£
Sunday 24 September		adult ticket @ £8 each	£
		child ticket @ £4 each	£
Total free tickets claimed		Total Cost	£

FREE TICKET (1 free ticket for every 4 purchased)*

Call the box office now on 0870 736 2000 and quote thenet readers offer or complete and return the order form to LIVE2000 Box Office, PO Box 111, London, HA9 0YH

If you do not wish to receive other information, please tick box. ☐

Payment Method

I enclose a cheque for £..... made payable to WTS Box Office

I wish to pay by

☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa ☐ Switch ☐ Amex ☐ Other Debit

Card No ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Valid from / / Expiry Date / /

Issue No (Switch only) ☐☐

Signature ..... Date .....

Name .....

Address .....

.....

Post code ..... Tel: .....

Email: .....

* Purchase four adult tickets in advance, in one transaction, all valid for the same day, and receive one ticket for the same day free.

CREDIT CARD HOTLINE 0870 736 2000

Wet Canvas

www.wetcanvas.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Art, you might have thought from your schooldays, was one of those things you either 'got' or didn't. Either your artistic efforts inspired gasps of admiration from peers, or they resembled the work of the criminally insane. On acid. You'd be wrong – the

online art behemoth wetcanvas.com makes the process of creating a masterpiece infinitely simple. With lessons on everything from still life to landscaping, plus sketching, oils and acrylics, you'll soon be creating something more than passable. If you'd rather watch, observe the site's team 'recreate' classic paintings piece-by-piece before your eyes.

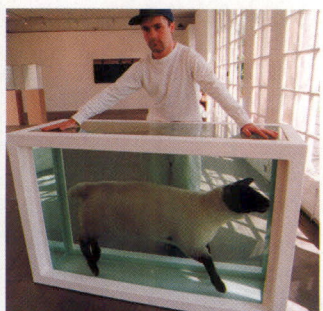
'That's a W you're looking for, Mr Hart'

putting paint to canvas are outlined in painstaking detail. While the site won't help improve your finished results in the slightest, its USP is the valuable technical detail it provides, including plenty of info on colour and perspective.

London International Art School

www.cowdisley.com ★★★★

If you've got even a basic level of artistic competency, you'll need to make John Hagan's site a bookmark. The experienced painter takes willing students through every stage of composition and realisation in accessible language devoid of jargon. For the more advanced pupil, there's an infinitely complex section focusing on such


'Sorry Sir, the lobster's off tonight'

highbrow concepts as 'psychology and the adjacent effect.' Unfortunately, Hagan's own efforts – used to illustrate his lessons – are, well, not much cop...

The Artist's Magazine

artistsmagazine.com ★★★★★

While TAM isn't anything approaching a comprehensive archive of art tips, it is just about the best-written and most accessible collection on the Web: the essays covering everything from basic sketching to decorative bird tables (don't ask) will improve even the most competent artist's technique. Best of all, every tip is accompanied by a full-size example, making this a visual – as well as a cerebral – delight.

Rolf's grapes were a big hit at the W.I.

Painting by numbers

ART Seen this year's Turner Prize entries? Reckon you could do better? Read on...

ArtLex

www.artlex.com ★★★

Art is characterised by its plethora of obscure terms, most of which are incomprehensible to the layman. But not any more – now you can amaze your friends down the boozer (sorry, the *coffee house*) by suddenly breaking into an in-depth discussion of monochromatic painting or transcendentalism, having perused this in-depth, fully-illustrated dictionary of art terms. Go on, you know you want to...

Art Studio Chalkboard

www.saumag.edu/art/studio/chalkboard.html ★★★★

Don't know one end of a paintbrush from the other? Drop by the Art Studio, where the basics of

best learning sites ★★★★★ where can I...

LEARN A FOREIGN LANGUAGE?

www.travlang.com
70 languages to learn online.
www.freetranslation.com
Translate tricky phrases – free.
www.ipl.org/youth/hello
Learn 30 languages free of charge.

LEARN A USEFUL SKILL?

www.how2.com
How to do almost anything.
www.learnfree.com
Learn with RealVideo tutorials.

FIND EXAM RESOURCES?

www.topmarks.co.uk
Help with hundreds of topics.
www.kevinsplayroom.co.uk
Boasts links for every school subject going.

Learn free at learnfree.com. Strange...

www.learn.co.uk
Providing useful tips for five- to 19-year-olds.
www.bjpinchbeck.com
The famous homework helper.

LEARN AN INSTRUMENT?

www.pianoworld.com
Tickle those ivories like a pro.
www.cyberfret.com
The 'online college of guitar wisdom'. Tutorials and chords available here.
www.v-zone.com/tpo/Trumpet.html
Blow your own trumpet on the Net.

LEARN WITHOUT SCHOOL?

www-icdl.open.ac.uk
The OU on the Internet.
www.tele-school.org
Learn online and interact, too.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.coatings.paint
Yes, it is an entire newsgroup dedicated to discussing paint...

GET CHATTING?

www.artistcorner.com
Submit your work to the gallery, then discuss it with fellow artists.

WORDS: ROBERT JEFFERY; PICTURES: PA

Coming Soon To A Screen Near You...

...A Virtual Shopping Experience That Really Is The Cat's Whiskers!

We all love to shop, don't we? Moving from shop to shop, seeing and touching and feeling the goods on offer, exploring new outlets and discovering new and exciting places. Nowadays, everyone is exploring on-line shopping. But the 2D world of the Web can be pretty flat and uninspiring for the shopper seeking out new and vibrant experiences.

Enter EC Land, a unique 3D environment that combines a real shopping experience with the convenience of the Internet. Its attractive virtual environment is clean, uncluttered and uncrowded, and allows you to shop from your home or desktop. Users can wander around the mall to find new stores or familiar haunts. Declan the EC Land Cat will act as your Tour Guide, offering help and advice and showing alternative ways to move around the mall.

So why not find out what EC Land has to offer right now, and enjoy a shopping experience that's certain to leave you purring.

EC LAND

A NEW DIMENSION IN ON-LINE SHOPPING

www.ecland.co.uk

Roofs were optional on Virgin Trains

'I'm going to be sick, mum'

THEME PARKS Looking for a fun day out? Then why not hang upside down on a high-velocity ride until your stomach empties onto innocent passers-by?

Alton Towers

www.altontowers.com ★★★

Ahh, the joys of British theme parks: screaming children, rain in August, two-hour queues for rides. Although Alton Towers can't do much about the first two, they can help with the latter. Book tickets in advance via this good-looking Flash-enhanced site and you'll get fast-track entry to the park, and, even better, will be allowed to ride on Oblivion and Nemesis before the park opens, thus avoiding the packs of roaming schoolchildren.

American Adventure

adventureworld.co.uk ★★★★

The Web site of this superb but relatively-unknown theme park, lurking in darkest Derbyshire, might look gorgeous, but it takes ages to load. Hang in there, though, because it's worth it, with details of some of the country's best rides – including Nightmare Niagara, one of the world's highest triple-drop log flumes with a 60ft drop at 42mph. You can book tickets online at the site: just remember – you read about it here first.

Blackpool Pleasure Beach

www.bpbltd.com

★★

OK, so it's not strictly a theme park, but it's got some great rides – although the claim that it's the 'Rollercoaster capital of the world!' is perhaps pushing it a bit. The Web site is disappointing: although it's informative and allows you to buy tickets online, it doesn't push the rides enough. Describing the trouser-wetting Pepsi Max Big One as a 'very high-speed turbulent coaster' doesn't do it justice...

The colourful wrecking ball headed for the holiday-makers

Disney World

www.disneyworld.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

The Disney magic is present right from the very start of your visit to this beautiful site – 'please stand by... as we sprinkle your computer with pixie dust' you're told as the home page downloads to your screen. There's loads of stuff on planning your visit, including a vacation organiser – enter the dates of your trip and it'll do the rest for you. Usefully, you can also book tickets online. However, what really sets the Disney World site apart is that there's enough to keep you entertained even if you can't make it to the Magic Kingdom in person – just check out the live Webcams dotted around the parks. Wonderful stuff.

Believe it.

It's Incredible!

Register Domain Names for:
NOW JUST:

WAS: $70 USD

£11.50!*

[.com .net .org]

No additional Internic Fees

Web Hosting/Email solutions starting at £7.95 NO SETUP FEES!

Hi there. We're **Blue Genesis Web Hosting**, and we've just made our Web Hosting/Email services **even EASIER!** Check out our new Domain Registration service. We now offer an unbelievably low price to register your very own Internet name.

After you've secured your name, consider hosting your Website with us. We challenge you to find a more **robust, user friendly, cost effective, hosting/email solution. Plus:** state of the art **E-commerce Capabilities** included with packages.**

Blue Genesis
The Next Generation in Web Hosting
sales@bluegenesis.co.uk

This is Web Hosting Made Easy!

*One year of service.
**begin with bronze package

www.bluegenesis.co.uk

Buy on-line and save fff's on PC software

@jakarta

All the latest Games and PC software titles at low, low prices.

www.jakarta.co.uk

or phone 0800 092 0077

NET2

Enjoy the Unfair Advantage

Telephone lines are open Monday – Friday 9am to 9pm, Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm.

www.thename.co.uk

Premium Service

- 10Mb. web space
- cgi + front page extensions
- all nominet fees • unlimited e-mail aliases
- Web control panel

£4.99 a month (+VAT)

Special Offer

Domain names

• co.uk £15 • .com £38

(Includes 2 years fees, registration, parking)

• co.uk £30 • .com £55

includes e-mail and web-page forwarding

* all prices +VAT@ 17.5%

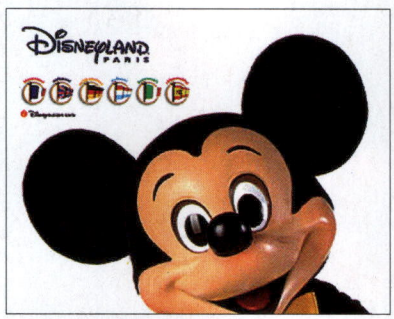
FREEPHONE 0800 542 2679

'I love the smell of napalm in the morning'

Chessington World of Adventures

www.chessington.co.uk ★★★

Chessington gained the status of theme park with the addition of hair-raising rides a few years ago. The 'thrillometer' on its Shocked site is a nice touch, but there simply aren't enough pictures of the rides. It's great for finding out about the park's themed weeks, however – such as the intriguingly-named 'love week' – and you save with online booking.



Disneyland Paris

www.disneylandparis.com ★★★

You'd expect something magical from Disney – this *is* the company that has delighted kids for decades. Well, you won't find much of it here at the French branch of the mega-park chain. It's a useful-enough site, with a video of the rides and info on schedules, but it's all a bit dull. The 360-degree pictures of the hotel rooms are fun though – watch those walls spin! – and saves the expense of getting drunk for the same feeling.

Drayton Manor Theme Park

www.draytonmanor.co.uk ★★★★

This theme park near Tamworth in Staffordshire might be small, but its funky Web presence puts some of the larger venues to shame. There's plenty of information on the many rides and booking online brings a discount on admission. There's also details on StormForce 10, the fastest 'wet knuckle' ride in Britain – even more scary when you find out it was launched by Steps.

Dreamworld

www.dreamworld.com.au ★★★★

OK, so it's miles away – Australia, to be precise – but if you're ever in the area, Dreamworld is well worth a visit. Thoughtfully-but-sickeningly dedicated to 'the happiness of all people', the park has 11 themed areas, explained on this excellent site; it also has video of the rides. And the map helpfully shows where the toilets are for when you come off the rides.

'OK, I'm the sartorial offender'

Lightwater Valley Theme Park

www.lightwatervalley.co.uk ★★★

Apparently, the thrills at this packed park in North Yorkshire are 'family-sized', and the accompanying site shows this – lots of bright and funky colours. But although it's quick to navigate, there really isn't enough here – just info on opening times and a discount on entrance prices, which, unusually, depend on your height, rather than age.

Thorpe Park

www.thorpe-park.co.uk ★★★

It's beautifully-designed, and the 'thrillometer' will tell you which rides to head for first (depending on whether you're a thrill monkey or a scaredy-cat) but once again (yawn) there just aren't enough pictures. There is plenty on the new ride Tidal Wave, and read about X:\No Way Out, a rollercoaster that hurls you backwards in the dark. Book online for special discounts.

best kids sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND KIDS' TV SITES?

www.citv.co.uk

The fun begins here with all your children's TV favourites, from *Dog and Duck* to *The Wombles*.

www.bbc.co.uk/education/home

Will guide you towards all BBC kids' TV favourites, plus Schools Online.

Buy them something nice for the hols at funstore.co.uk

BUY TOYS ONLINE?

www.toysrus.co.uk

Offers easy shopping access to all the big brand-name toys.

www.funstore.co.uk

A real house of fun for those in search of toys.

www.etoys.co.uk

Well-organised online toy shop with handy 'favourite toy' finder.

FIND IDEAS FOR DAYS OUT?

www.bbc.co.uk/ukok

The BBC does it again with this guide to fun for the holidays.

www.virgin.net/daysout

Masses of ideas for those great British days out.

FIND BEDTIME STORIES?

www.home-office-mall.com/bedtime-story

Stories you can print out.

www.bedtimebooks.com

A bit worthy, but worth a look.

FIND TEENAGE SITES?

www.teen-scene.com

Everything for the wired teenager.

www.teen-net.com

Innovative teen portal.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

rec.roller-coaster

Information on the newest rides.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

To join the Disneylandfans list, send an email marked 'subscribe Disneylandfans' to ***Lovekerith@aol.com***.

GET CHATTING?

www.kidsnation.com

Send the kids to a dedicated children's chat room.

Looking for more Kids sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

NOT-SO-AMUSING AMUSEMENTS

WHEN RIDES GO WRONG

As if being hurtled and thrown around on an (often aging) rollercoaster wasn't terrifying enough, there's always the possibility – slight, admittedly, but still there – that it might, just might, have an accident. To discover the truth, check out the World of Coasters site, created by 'coaster fans (*www.rollercoaster.com/roller_coaster_accidents*). It will prove your fears right – they *do* have accidents, and nasty ones at that. Read here how people have been hurt, killed or generally just maimed in the name of 'fun' when safety belts aren't correctly fastened, coasters crash or stop in mid loop, or if passengers lose their senses and stand up when they simply should stay sitting. Let it be a warning to you all.

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY; PICTURES: REX

'Football, volleyball – what's the difference?'

Cheatfinder

www.cheatfinder.co.uk ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

There's no messing with the niceties of design on this UK-based cheat portal, but the search engine gets you what you need, quickly, which is just what you want if you're stuck on Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation at four in the morning. No messing, just help for PC, PlayStation, Nintendo and Dreamcast. And if you can't find a specific chat or tip, email the team and they'll try and find it for you and add it to the database – now that's service.

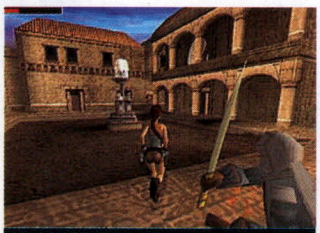
If you can't win one way...

CHEATS AND TIPS Spent hours stuck on the same level? Let the Net cut those corners for you...

A World Of Fun

www.worlddesign.net/ ★★★

Cheats, reviews and a weekly newsletter: what more could you ask for? Whatever it is it's probably here, because this site is linked to a massive online shopping mall. The cheats, though, are pretty basic. There are plenty of them, but loads are for old titles that are already gathering dust in games-exchange shops around the country.



'He's behind you...'

Cheat Code Central

www.cheatcc.com ★★★★★

Cheat Code Central claims to be the most comprehensive cheat site in the world. It's updated daily, and it's hard to find fault with the sheer volume of codes for all the major formats, including the resurgent eagerly awaited PlayStation2. There's no detailed walkthroughs, but there are thousands of codes, saved games files, release dates and even full manuals here.

The laser treatment was impressive...

Cheat Planet

www.cheatplanet.com ★★★★

Cheat Planet offers the lot: saved games, walkthroughs and strategy game FAQs. If the brown and beige colour scheme is found wanting, the range of game cheats is not. You can submit your own cheats, too, so if you've managed to work out a code to dress your Quake III enemies as Girl Guides you can let world know.

...but results were problematic

Gamerzone

www.gamerzone.com ★★★★

Gamerzone is more appealing on the eye than the majority of the other sites here, but that in no way distracts from the quality of the cheats available. The range is amazing, but the feeling that it's not updated as regularly as some of the others detracts from an otherwise excellent site.

IGN Guides

guides.ign.com ★★★★★

Wow – cheats and design sensibilities on the same site. Highly unusual, somewhat revolutionary, but we like it. Part of a much larger gaming site, this excellent resource with a powerful search engine offers you the chance to download PDF guides to keep by your side during gaming.

BE A BETTER CHEAT

SCHOOL FOR SCOUNDRELS

Designed for the serial cheater, GameShark (***www.dexchange.net/gs/gameshark.home***) peripherals slot into the console of your choice and give you instant access to hundreds of cheats including level skips, extra weapons, hidden characters, maximum health and just about anything else you could want. Don't worry about new games not being covered, either, as once you've splashed the cash – averaging about $49 for the PlayStation version – on the GameShark you need for your system, you can download updates, and cheats for new games as and when the cheating rotters crack the codes.

'I win again, old boy'

Kriil's Killer Walkthroughs

www.geocities.com/TimesSquare/2117/index.html ★★★★

If the odd hint, tip or code to get some extra health or weapons isn't enough to help you on your gaming way, what you need is a complete walkthrough. These will get you from start to finish of your favourite games. (But then, why buy the game?)

The Spoiler Centre

www.the-spoiler.com ★★★★

The name of this site says it all. Cheating can spoil your gaming pleasure, and should only really be entered into if you're just about to chuck your PlayStation/N64/Dreamcast out the window of your 17th floor council-funded bachelor pad. However, better to cheat than to never again play a game you've just forked out £30 on.

Universal Hint System

www.uhshints.com/hints/readers.phtml ★★★★★

There's no point in giving away the ranch with the horse son, as my old dad used to say. Pretty irrelevant considering we came from Barking, but still, this excellent site fits into that ideal: you can get as little or as much help as you want.

XCheater

www.xcheater.com ★★★★★

Stuck on Sonic Blast Man 2 on your old SNES? Well help is at hand, because XCheater's array of cheats goes back that far. There's no walkthroughs or tips, but with the range of cheats and saved games here you won't need them. To download a saved game to your PlayStation you'll need to get some extra hardware, but there are links to buy that as well.

best games sites ★★★★★

where can I...

PLAY GAMES ONLINE?

www.shockwave.com
Shocked games and cartoons.
www.gameplay.com
Britain's biggest online gaming site.
www.gameszone.com
Free service covering all of Europe.
www.freeloader.com
Play the latest titles for free.

BUY GAMES?

www.gamesstreet.infront.co.uk
Excellent deals on a range of games.
www.chipsworld.co.uk
Everything you need for consoles.
www.game-retail.co.uk
The shop of the High Street store.

FIND DEMOS?

www.happypuppy.com
New demos and shareware games.
www.gameaddict.net
Demos and reviews for PC games.
www.3dfiles.com
Demos and shareware downloads.
www.acdownload.com
Plenty of great downloads.

FIND GAMING NEWS?

www.gamesdomain.co.uk
News and game-related features.
www.gamedaily.com
All the latest news on this busy site.
www.ign.com
Thorough worldwide games news.
www.bluesnews.com
In-depth articles and features.

PLAY TRADITIONAL GAMES?

games.yahoo.com
Card games, board games and much more.
www.bignetwork.com
A collection of classic gaming tournaments.
www.pogo.com
Both traditional and arcade games.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

alt.games.cheats
Got a hot tip? Share it here...

GET CHATTING?

www.alienmoon.com
Chat and cheats for PlayStation and PC.

Play games for nowt – go along to freeloader.com

Looking for more Games sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: SHAUN MARIN; PICTURES: EMPICS, KOBAL COLLECTION

First with all the motorsport news.

AUTOSPORT.COM

Danger, Will Robinson! Danger!

ROBOTS Whether you want to build a C3PO or take control of someone else's 'bot online, read on...

Cool Robot of the Week

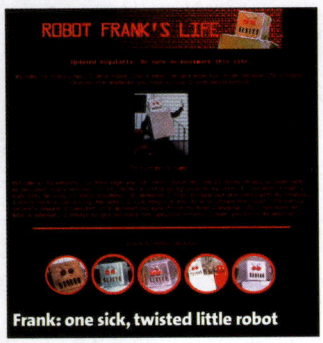
ranier.hq.nasa.gov/telerobotics_page/coolrobots.html ★★★★

The boys at NASA love robots – they're cheaper than astronauts and no one cares if they get left behind on Mars. There are four years' worth of robo-projects archived here, plus links to other robotics sites. Best is 'Real Robots on the Web': a collection of droids you can control over the Net. Dance, robot! Dance!

Robot Books.com

www.ro botbooks.com ★★

Want to build your own mechanical friend, but not sure where to start? Then go shopping here – and not just for books but for kits, toys, even robot-related magazines. Or, if you need a break from the T1000 you're assembling down in the basement, order a selection of robo-movies from their catalogue.



Frank: one sick, twisted little robot

Robot Frank's Life

www.robotfrank.com ★★★★

Frank's a robot. And he's angry, stuck in small-town USA with his friend Robot Ron, hanging out at Taco Bell. He pours out his heart to his online robot diary, complete with snaps. Okay, so in reality Frank and Ron are a couple of blokes wearing robot suits – but if you like *Beavis and Butthead* (and we do), you'll like this.

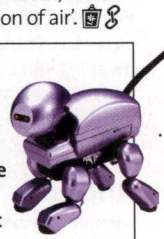
The Robot Menu

www.robotics.com/robomenu/index.html ★★★

If you're handy with a spanner and soldering iron, why not put your creation online at the Robot Menu? Fill in a form, attach a photo and your baby could join the 200 home-grown 'bots on the site, including such hi-tech monsters like the Flobot, which 'floats on a cushion of air'.

Android World

www.androidworld.com ★★★★★



thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

An android is a robot that looks like a human, and this site is jam-packed with the terrifying things. Meet Roberta, whose skinless head would put even Damien Hirst off his dinner, and Tara, who appears to be modelled on a blow-up doll. There's plenty more serious stuff on offer, however, from where to buy the world's smallest video cameras (for eyes) to assembling wigs, teeth and hair for your science project. But the highlight has to be the site's robo-centric movie guide: Disney's sci-fi turkey *The Black Hole* gets a succinct 'Bad dialogue. Some robots and cyborgs', while the 1971 Bruce Dern snoozathon *Silent Running* rates 'Three of the best robots ever designed'. Strange how they didn't put that on the poster.

Yes, we know it's not a robot. Get a life!

'Amazing – he looks so human,' marvelled the driver

best science sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND SCIENCE NEWS?

www.eurekalert.org

Press releases of new inventions. Original sources of stories that will appear later elsewhere.

whyfiles.news.wisc.edu

If there's science behind a news story, this explains it all.

ASK AN EXPERT A QUESTION?

www.allexperts.com

Ask a question on anything and get a relevant answer.

newton.dep.anl.gov/aasquest.htm

10,000-Q&A database. If you have a new one, volunteers will answer it.

READ BOOK REVIEWS?

www.newscientist.com

Best for UK science book reviews.

www.sciam.com

Click on the 'Current Issue', then 'Reviews' for all the latest goodies.

FIND A SCIENCE WEBCAM?

www.skyview.de/eng/start.htm

Control a telescope in Germany for five minutes and gaze at the stars.

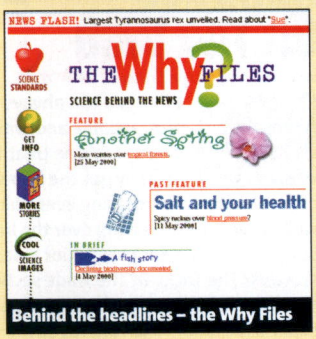
eclipse.span.ch/liveshow.htm

Watch all manner of meteorological events.

GET AN UPDATE ON NASA?

www.nasa.gov

Links to everything from the latest Hubble telescope pictures to International Space Station reports.



Behind the headlines – the Why Files

www.reston.com/nasa/watch.html

A well-informed collection of often critical reports about NASA.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

comp.robotics.misc

The Usenet home of the robotics world. Swap building tips here.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

The EXN News Bulletin is an excellent weekly round-up of science, nature and adventure tales. Subscribe from ***exn.ca/science***.

GET CHATTING?

www.dry.net/~inworld/apps/Chat3D.html

Innovative '3D Space Chat' which lets you walk around a virtual space station as you interact with fellow science freaks.

Looking for more Science sites? Turn to Need To Know on page 108

WORDS: MATTHEW BINGHAM; PICTURES: KOBAL

Has Hugh Scully seen your ring?

ANTIQUES Don't waste your time in dusty old shops – the future of antiques lies on the Net

'Olives on a stick! Who'll buy my olives on a stick?'

Antiques.co.uk

www.antiques.co.uk ★★★★

Why bother trawling around antique shops when you can do it online? This site brings you the pick of fine art and antique dealers from across the UK. All items are guaranteed for authenticity, and the tidy layout of the site is a darn site easier to use than an auction – meaning you aren't going to end up with something you never wanted in the first place after a simple scratch of your nose.

Antiques World *(UK)*

www.antiquesworld.co.uk ★★★★

Don't be fooled by its calm exterior – Antiques World is actually a hotbed of info about the heady world of antiques and collectibles. Lists are its strong point – there are columns and columns of information on forthcoming fairs and markets, courses, tours and exhibitions. Meanwhile, the expert-written features should ensure that your antique fancy is satisfied.

Collectibles

collectibles.about.com ★★★★

Pursue every McDonald's giveaway toy? Couldn't get enough Beanie Babies? Then head for the About.com collectibles site, which caters for those who hanker for the antiques of the future. It'll tell you how to start a collection ('feel items to see if they are you'), as well as giving advice on where to buy. It will also help you get in touch with other collectors. And, if your collection is a wee bit unusual it'll direct you to sites such as the Museum of Dirt. And you thought you were odd for collecting bookmarks...

Hugh Scully's World Of Antiques

www.qxl.com ★★★★

Need a piece of art evaluated? Best head to QXL, where the omnipresent Hugh Scully awaits to impart his vast knowledge (for a small fee of £12). Simply send info and a picture of the object along with the 12 quid, and let the team of 18 experts do their stuff – ours, a valuation of a ring (that turned out to be Roman), was with us in four days. It's dead easy to use, but we reckon the chance to have lunch with Mr Scully to discuss 'your mutual love of art and antiques' is worth the visit alone.

'It's an early C20 battleaxe, slightly marked, no real value'

BBC Online – Antiques On The Web

www.bbc.co.uk/antiques ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Ahhh, you can always rely the Beeb for good, honest information – and with such a long-running programme as Sunday teatime treat the *Antiques Roadshow*, they've certainly got the knowledge to do so. There's an excellent buyer's guide on purchasing everything from Bakelite to wardrobes, as well as sections on buying over the Internet, at auctions and at those bargain-filled car boot sales. Got a nasty case of woodworm in your drawers? The Tricks Of The Trade section will save them (stick 'em in the freezer) as well as your other damaged items, or you can chat to the experts (including housewives' favourite Hugh Scully) to discuss antiques. Add to that the fascinating 'Roadshow Finds', a quiz and 'Identifying Antiques' sections and you'll never miss a bargain ever again.

best history sites ★★★★★

where can I...

Research British history at thehistorychannel.co.uk

RESEARCH BRITISH HISTORY?

www.thehistorychannel.co.uk
Resource guide and forum for British history.
www.great-britain.co.uk/history/history.htm
Like a huge textbook online; concise but fun.

FIND OUT ABOUT WWII?

britaininworldwar2.future.easyspace.com
Well-written nuggets on the 1939-45 conflict.
www.geocities.com/Pentagon/4143
The Battle of Britain is explored in detail.

VISIT AN ONLINE MUSEUM?

www.nhm.ac.uk
Natural History Museum.
www.museums.co.uk
Directory of museums.

BUY A BIT OF HISTORY?

www.collectiques.co.uk
Huge online antique directory.
www.TheAntiquesDirectory.co.uk
Where and how to buy old stuff.

RESEARCH THE MONARCHY?

www.royal.gov.uk
The official site, where Her Maj will answer all or any of your queries.
www.dcs.hull.ac.uk/public/genealogy/royal
Log on and discover the Royal Family's history.

RESEARCH MY ANCESTORS?

www.pro.gov.uk
Public Records Office advice.
www.familysearch.com
Births, marriages and deaths in a searchable format.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

rec.antiques
A second opinion on your valuations.

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Join the Antiques Collecting list by sending an email marked 'subscribe antique-collect' to
majordomo@listserv.prodigy.com

GET CHATTING?

chat.genealogy.org
Family research in a chat room.

WORDS: SARAH WAKELY; PICTURES: PA

WELCOME TO THE

WORLD WEIRD WEB

quirky world.com

Be first to find the weirdest most wonderful websites and get all the latest news on what's normal in the world of the abnormal, e-mailed to you free in a weekly magazine.

To register simply go to www.QuirkyWorld.com or e-mail subscribe@www.quirkyworld.com

The prickly skyscraper spoiled the giant's beach ball party

'Amazing what they can do these days...'

WEIRD SCIENCE Meet these boffins toiling away at the very fringes of discovery

D.A.R.P.A.

www.darpa.mil ★★★

This US military organisation's site exhibits a torturously bureaucratic degree of detail, but life at the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency must be anything but dull. Take for instance their plan to build micro aircraft, complete with flapping wings. The weirdest item of all, however, is the Future Combat Systems project, whose logo clearly depicts a flying saucer. Could this little graphic possibly be a subtle dig at all those UFO conspiracy theorists?

Foresight Institute

www.foresight.org ★★★★

Imagine if every night a hoard of microscopic robots set to work cleaning your house, or cancerous cells could be eradicated by machines so small they traverse your bloodstream. Nanotechnology offers the potential realisation of both these wonders – and plenty more. Despite the complexity of the science and academic style of the site, this sprawling resource should be commended for making the subject understandable and broadly accessible.

NASA Breakthrough Propulsion Physics Program

www.lerc.nasa.gov/WWW/bpp ★★

If you think a Warp Drive belongs only on *Star Trek*, prepare to be surprised. If the scientists here make a breakthrough, one day we might be able to visit other stars. This should be inspiring stuff, but although the content is fascinating the dated design barely breaks the sound barrier, let alone the speed of light.

The *Trek* dolls came in lovely packaging

Nikola Tesla – Erased At The Smithsonian

www.concentric.net/~jwwagner ★★★

Though his vast exposure on the Net casts turn-of-the-century inventor

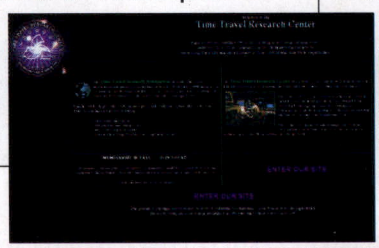
WORDS: JOHN GOSLING; PICTURES: KOBAL COLLECTION

Time Travel Research Centre

www.time-travel.com ★★★★★

thenet ★★★★★ AWARD

Time travel is becoming scientifically acceptable, at least on a theoretical level, but this site is working to make it a reality. Wishful thinking aside, this is the place to come if you want to gain an understanding of the physics of time travel – and indeed, you can start with the most simple of precepts, such as hours, minutes and seconds. Things then start to get a little more complicated, but the relaxed style and occasional diversion into fantasy will keep your mind ticking over.



Nikola Tesla in the mould of Doc Emmet Brown from *Back To The Future*, this site spurns connections to nonsense like The Philadelphia Experiment, claiming instead that Tesla hasn't been recognised for his ground-breaking theories.

Princeton Engineering Anomalies Research (PEAR)

www.princeton.edu/~pear/index.htm ★★★

Perhaps the oddest aspect of this site at the prestigious Princeton University is its reluctance to use words like 'paranormal'. Instead they are undertaking the 'scientific study of consciousness-related physical phenomena'. Actually this isn't surprising, as what they mean is influencing random events by force of will. That's akin to committing academic suicide, so kudos to their bravery.

Quest for Truth: The Philadelphia Experiment

www.geocities.com/Area51/Labyrinth/9378 ★★★★

Did the US Navy cause one of their ships to vanish in October 1943 in a bizarre experiment involving Einstein's Unified Field Theory? No they didn't claims this researcher, arguing against a plethora of sites that claim conspiracy in high places. This is a fascinating tale of scientific skullduggery on the seas.

Remote Viewing Instructional Services Ltd

www.rviewer.com ★★★

Quite one of the oddest episodes in the history of cold war spying may provide some scientific credence to psychic powers. Why else would the CIA have sponsored Remote Viewing, a process in which specially trained operatives used only the power of their minds to infiltrate foreign targets?

Science Frontiers

www.science-frontiers.com ★★★★

A weekly digest of news stories that 'challenge prevailing scientific paradigms.' Odd quirks of mathematics and the bizarre rules of quantum physics are just a few of the subjects covered in an issue, and with over 2,000 articles to peruse, this site can prove a real eye-opener.

Science Hobbyist

www.amasci.com ★★★

Here you can find a wonderful collection of crazies, hopefuls and garage boffins out to change the laws of physics and throw a large monkey wrench into the staid machinery of mainstream scientific thinking. Maintained by self-confessed weirdo William J. Beaty, we can only say that the planet needs more people like this.

CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE

WHAT IS HAARP?

With that reassuringly placid acronym (so beloved of military planners) and a carefully managed Web site that even includes a Webcam, *w3.nrl.navy.mil/projects/haarp/haarpIndex.html*, the High Frequency Active Auroral Research Program, at first appears to be a rather innocuous attempt to examine the behaviour of the ionosphere. Not so, claim many conspiracy fans. To them HAARP is everything from a death ray to a mind control device. For one particularly good – and rather sardonic – view from behind the barricades, try Hugh's Haarp Info Page at *www.isleofavalon.co.uk/local/h-pages/pro-freedom/haarp_1.html*.

best weird sites ★★★★★

where can I...

FIND WEIRD NEWS?

www.joeha.com/whiteboard
A collection of those silly little stories to email your mates.
www.tabloid.net
National Enquirer-style paper.
www.bbc.co.uk/weird
The Beeb comes over all weird, with a haunted house and 'ghostcam'.
www.witchvox.com
Discover the world of witchcraft and the paranormal in exhaustive detail.

FIND THE REAL X-FILES?

www.seti-inst.edu
The world's top ET-hunters try to track down those little green men.
www.ufomag.co.uk
UFO Magazine, with material for thought-provoking debate.
foia.fbi.gov/unusual.htm
Over 1,600 pages of previously secret material from the FBI.
www.foia.ucia.gov
More grainy, indistinct documents from the US Government's vaults.

LEARN ABOUT CULTS?

cti.itc.virginia .edu/~jkh8x/soc257/home.html
The maddest cults in the world, lovingly detailed for your perusal.
www.mayhem.net/crime/cults.html
Find out what happens when dangerous cults go over the edge.
www.factnet.org
Regular newsletter dedicated to tracking scary sects worldwide.
www.religioustolerance.org/destruct.htm
Get the lowdown on potentially dangerous cults before you join.

FIND OUT ABOUT AREA 51?

www.ufomind.com/area51
A hefty resource on the secret base.

Eccentric Auntie – bbc.co.uk/weird

www.nauticom.net/users/ata/area51.html
Excellent site. Includes travel tips.
www.parascope.com/articles/1196/area1.htm
Find a photograph of the infamous black mailbox here.

FIND A CONSPIRACY THEORY?

www.disinfo.com
Conspiracies for the whole family.
www.4conspiracytheories.com
A wealth of conspiratorial links.
www.conspire.com
Sceptical tales with tongue placed firmly in cheek.
www.larouchepub.com
Very, very worrying indeed.

FIND A NEWSGROUP?

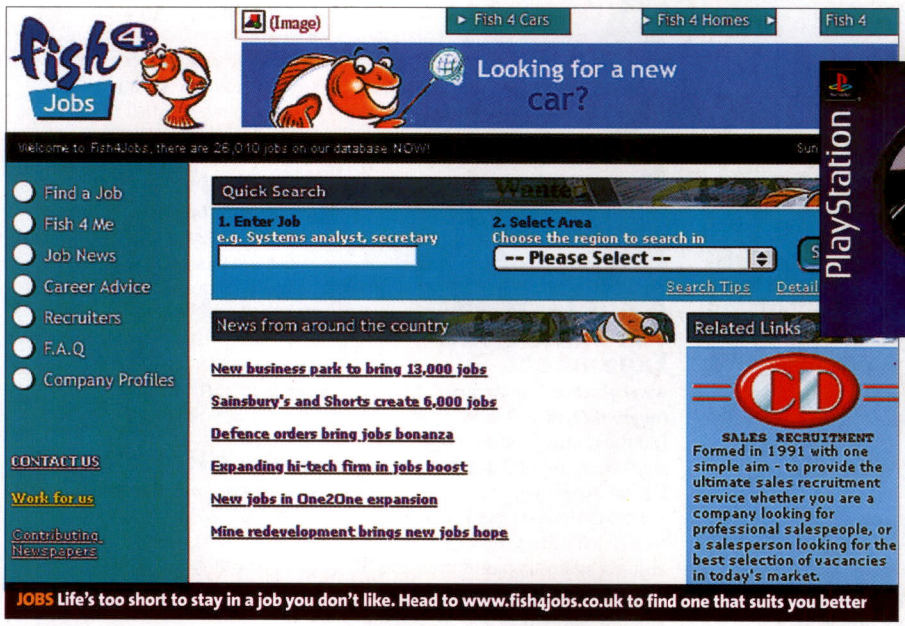
alt.sci.physics.new-theories
The latest physics developments (and some pure speculation).

JOIN A MAILING LIST?

Join the generally weird via the 'Generally Weird' list from
www.integral.org/mailman/listinfo/generallyweird

GET CHATTING?

www.scibernet.com/xfiles
Drop in for regular chats with those who know the truth is out there.



JOBS Life's too short to stay in a job you don't like. Head to www.fish4jobs.co.uk to find one that suits you better

GAMES Fun and the proverbial at www.play station.com

CLASSIFIEDS Skip-loads of old junk for sale

The guide book for

You wouldn't hit the road without a map, so why cruise the information superhighway

BANKING
ONLINE BANKS
Abbey National ***www.abbeynational.co.uk***
Alliance & Leicester ***www.alliance-leicester.co.uk***
Barclays ***www.barclays.co.uk***
Co-operative Bank ***www.co-operativebank.co.uk***
Direct Line ***www.directline.com***
Egg ***www.egg.co.uk***
First Direct ***www.firstdirect.co.uk***
First-e ***www.first-e.com***
Halifax ***www.halifax-online.co.uk***
HSBC ***www.banking.hsbc.co.uk***
Lloyds TSB ***www.lloydstsb.co.uk***
Nationwide ***www.nationwide.co.uk***
Natwest ***www.natwest.co.uk***
Royal Bank Of Scotland ***www.royalbankscot.co.uk***
Smile ***www.smile.co.uk***
Virgin Direct ***www.virgin-direct.co.uk***

CLASSIFIEDS
Ad-Mart Classifieds ***www.ad-mart.co.uk***
Economist Classifieds Market Place ***www.classified.economist.com***
Eureka-net ***www.eureka-net.co.uk***
Free Classified ***www.freeclassified.co.uk***
JJ Electronic Plaza Classifieds ***www.jjplaza.com/onlinead***
Localads ***www.localads.net***
London's Classifieds ***www.classifieds-free.net***
LOOT ***www.loot.com***
netTRADER ***www.nettrader.co.uk***
PhotoAds ***www.photoads.co.uk***
Sellitnet ***www.sellitnet.com***

DOWNLOADS
Apple ***asu.info.apple.com***
Download Net ***www.download.net***
Download Warehouse ***www.downloadwarehouse.com***
Freeware ***www.freewarehome.com***
ICQ ***www.icq.com***
Memoware ***www.memoware.com***
Microsoft ***www.microsoft.com***
MP3 ***www.mp3.com***
Real Player ***www.real.com***
Shareware ***www.download.com***
Shockwave ***www.shockwave.com***
ZDNet ***www.hotfiles.com***

ENCYCLOPEDIAS
Encarta ***encarta.msn.com***
Encyclopedia Britannica ***www.britannica.com***
Encyclopedia.com ***www.encyclopedia.com***
Funkandwagnalls ***www.funkandwagnalls.com***
Hutchinson Encyclopedia ***www.bt-ern.co.uk/helicon***

GAMES
GUIDES AND COMPANIES
Dreamcast ***www.dreamcast.com***
Future Games Network ***www.fgnetwork.com***
GameCenter ***www.gamecenter.com***
Game Daily ***www.gamedaily.com***
Gameplay ***www.gameplay.com***
Gamers.com ***www.gamers.com***
GameSpot ***www.gamespot.com***
GameSpyder ***www.gamespyder.com***
GameStats ***www.gamestats.com***
MacGaming ***www.maccentral.com/games***
MultiPlayer ***www.multiplayer.com***
Nintendo ***www.nintendo.com***
PlayStation ***www.playstation.com***
Sega ***www.sega-europe.com***
Total Video Games ***www.totalvideogames.com***
Yahoo! ***games.yahoo.com***
Zone ***www.zone.com***

GENEALOGY
British Ancestral Research ***www.brit-a-r.demon.co.uk***
British Heraldic Institute ***www.kwtelecom.com/heraldry***
Family Search ***www.familysearch.com***
Genealogy Research Source ***www.genealogy.bookpub.net***
Public Record Office ***www.pro.gov.uk***
Rootsweb ***www.rootsweb.com***

GOVERNMENT
BRITAIN
10 Downing Street ***www.number-10.gov.uk***
Arts Council ***www.artscouncil.org.uk***
Department for Culture, Media and Sport ***www.culture.gov.uk***
Department of Health ***www.doh.gov.uk***
Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions ***www.detr.gov.uk***
Ministry of Defence ***www.mod.uk***
Open.gov.uk ***www.open.gov.uk***
Scottish Parliament ***www.scotland.gov.uk***
Welsh Assembly ***www.wales.gov.uk***

THE WORLD
Australia ***www.fed.gov.au***
China ***www.gov.cn***
European Commission ***europa.eu.int***
France ***www.premier-ministre.gouv.fr***
Germany ***www.bundesregierung.de***
Russia ***www.gov.ru***
United Nations ***www.un.org***
United States ***www.whitehouse.gov***

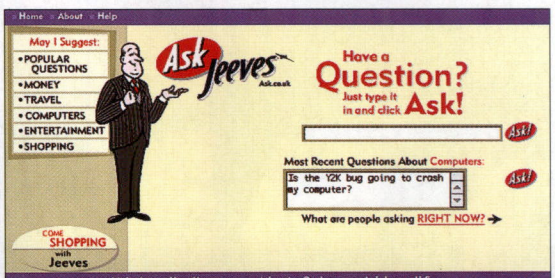
HEALTH
DOCTORS & DIAGNOSIS
Ask Dr Weil ***cgi.pathfinder.com/drweil***
Ask The Doc ***www.ask-the-doc.com***
British Medical Journal ***www.bmj.com***
Healthy Ideas ***www.healthyideas.com***
Intelihealth ***www.intelihealth.com***
Mayo Clinic ***www.mayo.edu***
MedRef ***www.medscout.com***
Mental Health ***www.mentalhealth.com***
NetDoctor ***www.netdoctor.co.uk***
Patient ***www.patient.co.uk***

SUPPORT & INFORMATION
Alcoholics Anonymous ***www.alcoholics-anonymous.org***
Alzheimer's Disease Society ***www.alzheimers.org.uk***
Babyzone ***www.babyzone.com***
Cancer Bacup ***www.cancerbacup.org.uk***
Centre For Online Addiction ***netaddiction.com***
Diabetes UK ***www.diabetic.org.uk***
Don't Smoke ***www.dontsmoke.com***

PICTURES: BBC, EMPICS, KOBAL, WORLD PICTURES

HEALTH Got a few problems? Best head for the Internet and get some help

HOMES **Abodes galore at assertahome: www.asserta home.com**



SEARCH Jeeves has the answer: pop the question at www.ask.co.uk

your Web travels

without knowing where you're going? That's where our monthly-updated guide comes in...

Fitness Online ***www.fitnessonline.com***
HIV/AIDS Information & Links ***www.brad.ac.uk/staff/ijhodgson/hivlinks.htm***
National Meningitis Trust ***www.meningitis-trust.org.uk***
WeightWatchers ***uk.weightwatchers.com***

HOMES
ESTATE AGENTS
Bushells ***www.bushells.com***
Chancellors ***www.chancellors.co.uk***
CityLet ***www.citylet.com***
Cluttons Daniel Smith ***www.cluttons.com***
Foxtons ***www.foxtons.co.uk***
Friend & Falcke ***www.friendandfalcke.co.uk***
Goldschmidt Howland ***www.goldschmidt-howland.co.uk***
Hamptons ***www.hamptons.co.uk***
John D. Wood ***www.johndwood.co.uk***
Knight Frank ***www.knightfrank.co.uk***
Strutt & Parker ***www.struttandparker.co.uk***
Your Move ***www.your-move.co.uk***

PROPERTY FINDERS
Accommodation Directory ***www.accommodation.com***
Assertahome ***www.assertahome.com***
Bamboo Avenue ***www.bambooavenue.com***
Easier.co.uk ***www.easier.co.uk***
HomeDirectory ***www.homedirectory.com***
Homefile UK ***www.homefileuk.co.uk***
Home Free Home ***www.homefreehome.co.uk***
Homepages ***www.homepages.co.uk***
Home Sale ***www.home-sale.co.uk***
HomeSight ***www.homesight.co.uk***
Home to Home ***www.home-to-home.co.uk***
HouseNet ***www.housenet.co.uk***
Internet Property Finder ***www.propertyfinder.co.uk***
Lets Direct ***www.letsdirect.co.uk***
Pavilions of Splendour ***www.heritage.co.uk***
Property Sight ***www.property-sight.co.uk***
UK Property Gold ***www.ukpg.co.uk***

HUMOUR
Comedy Zone ***www.comedy-zone.net***
Cyber Comedian ***webtamers.com/comedian.html***
Funplanet ***www.funplanet.co.uk***
Funny ***www.funny.co.uk***
JokeDepot ***www.jokedepot.com***
JokePost ***www.jokepost.com***
Jongleurs ***www.jongleurs.com***
The Onion ***www.theonion.com***
South Park ***www.comedycentral.com***
TV Go Home ***www.tvgohome.com***
Uproar ***www.uproar.com***

JOBS
EMPLOYMENT AGENCIES
Brook Street ***www.brookstreet.co.uk***
Independent Appointments ***www.indappts.co.uk***
Manpower ***www.manpower.co.uk***
Reed ***www.reed.co.uk***

JOB SEARCHES
Expat Network ***www.expatnetwork.co.uk***
Fish4Jobs ***www.fish4jobs.co.uk***
Gradunet ***www.gradunet.co.uk***
Guardian ***www.jobsunlimited.co.uk***
Jobsearch UK ***www.jobsearch.co.uk***
Jobsin ***www.jobsin.co.uk***
Jobsite ***www.jobsite.co.uk***
MonsterBoard ***www.monster.co.uk***
Overseas Jobs ***www.overseasjobs.com***
Personnelnet ***www.personnelnet.com***
Stepstone ***www.stepstone.co.uk***
Temp Jobs ***www.tempjobs.co.uk***
Total Jobs ***www.totaljobs.com***
Yelcom ***www.yelcom.com***
Wide Eyes ***www.wideyes.com***

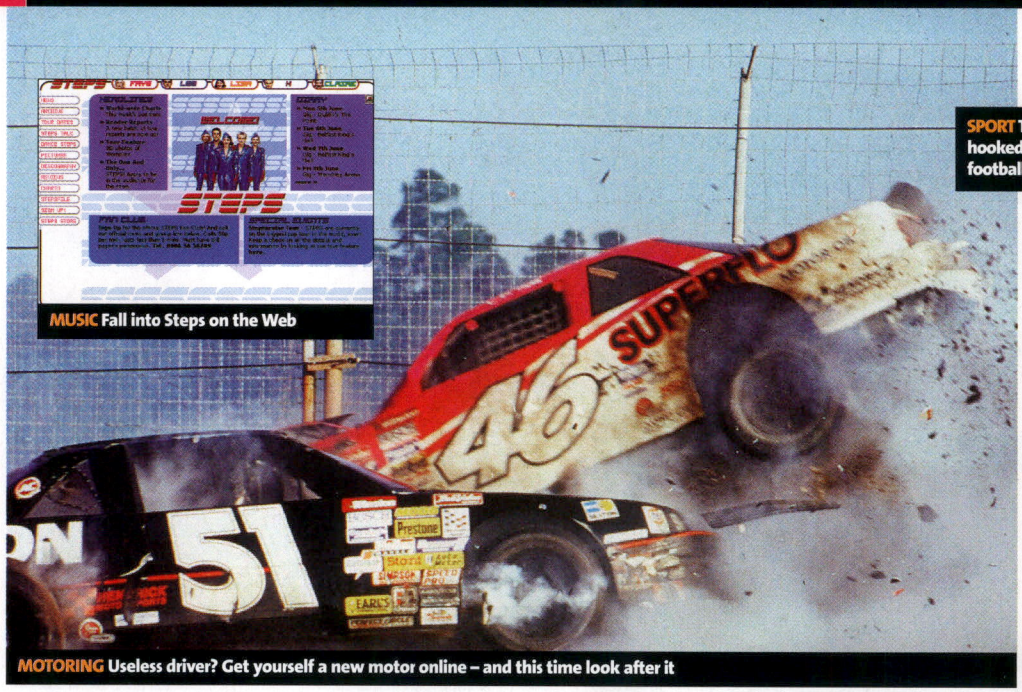
KIDS
0-8
Bedtime stories ***www.home-office-mall.com/bedtime-story***
Cartoon Network ***www.cartoonnetwork.co.uk***
FunSchool ***www.funschool.com***
Kidscom ***www.kidscom.com/orakc/Mousers/mouse.html***
Nickelodeon ***www.nickjr.com***
Sesame Street ***www.sesamestreet.com/preschool***

8 PLUS
AJ Kids ***www.ajkids.com***
BBC Schools Online ***www.bbc.co.uk/education/schools***
Club-Z ***www.club-z.com***
Disney ***www.disney.co.uk***
EduWeb ***www.eduweb.co.uk***
Family Education ***www.familyeducation.com***
BJ Pinchbeck Homework Helper ***www.bjpinchbeck.com***
Teen Advice ***www.teenadvice.net***
Thunk ***www.thunk.com***
Yahooligans ***www.yahooligans.com***

LAW
Desktop Lawyer ***www.desktoplawyer.freeserve.net***
Divorce Online ***www.divorce-online.co.uk***
Law Rights ***www.lawright.co.uk***
Legaldocs ***www.legaldocs.com***
UK Law Online ***www.leeds.ac.uk/law/hamlyn***

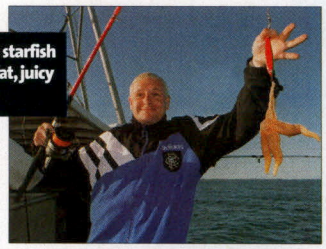
MAGAZINES
ONLINE MAGS
Dredly ***www.dredly.com***
Foocha ***www.foocha.com***
Garbled Communications UK ***www.geocities.com/SunsetStrip/Show/1322***
Nerve ***www.nerve.com***
Salon ***www.salon.com***
Seven ***www.sevenmag.com***
Slate ***www.slate.com***
Suck ***www.suck.com***
Word ***www.word.com***

MOTORING
CAR MANUFACTURERS
Audi ***www.audi.co.uk***
BMW ***www.bmw.co.uk***
Citroen ***www.citroen.co.uk***
Ferrari ***www.ferrari.it***
Fiat ***www.fiat.co.uk***

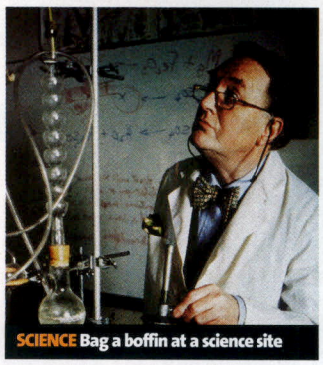


MUSIC Fall into Steps on the Web

MOTORING Useless driver? Get yourself a new motor online – and this time look after it



SPORT The starfish hooked a fat, juicy footballer



SCIENCE Bag a boffin at a science site

Ford ***www.ford.co.uk***
Honda ***www.honda.co.uk***
Jaguar ***www.jaguarcars.com***
Lotus ***www.lotuscars.co.uk***
Mazda ***www.mazda.co.uk***
Mercedes-Benz
www.mercedes-benz.co.uk
Nissan ***www.nissan-europe.com***
Peugeot ***www.peugeot.co.uk***
Porsche ***www.porsche.co.uk***
Rover ***www.rover.co.uk***
Toyota ***www.toyota.co.uk***
Vauxhall ***www.vauxhall.co.uk***
Volkswagen ***www.volkswagen.co.uk***
Volvo ***www.volvocars.volvo.co.uk***

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

Imperial War Museum
www.iwm.org.uk
National Gallery
www.nationalgallery.org.uk
Natural History Museum
www.nhm.ac.uk
Tate Gallery ***www.tate.org.uk***

MUSIC

BRITISH MP3 PORTALS

BeSonic ***www.besonic.com***
Brand New Music
www.brandnewmusic.com
Crunch ***www.crunch.co.uk***
Get Out There
www.getoutthere.bt.com
Getsigned.com ***www.get-signed.com***
Music Unsigned
www.musicunsigned.com
Peoplesound ***www.peoplesound.com***
Popwire ***www.popwire.com***
Vitaminic ***www.vitaminic.co.uk***

TOP ARTISTS

The Beatles ***members.tripod.com/~taz4158/pepper.html***
Blur ***www.blur.co.uk***
David Bowie
www.davidbowie.com
Boyzone ***www.boyzone.co.uk***
Catatonia ***www.catatonia.com***
Chemical Brothers
musicfanclubs.org/chemical
Fatboy Slim
www.normancook.cjb.net
Macy Gray ***www.macygray.com***
Jamiroquai ***www.jamiroquai.co.uk***
Manic Street Preachers
www.manics.co.uk
Oasis ***www.oasisinet.com***
Prince ***www.love4oneanother.com***
Radiohead ***www.radiohead.co.uk***
REM ***www.remhq.com***
Spice Girls
superspice.hypermart.net
Steps ***www.stepsofficial.com***
Stereophonics
www.stereophonics.co.uk
Supergrass ***www.supergrass.com***
Travis ***www.travisonline.com***
Robbie Williams
www.robbiewilliams.co.uk

NEWS

NEWSPAPERS

Electronic Telegraph
www.telegraph.co.uk
Guardian Unlimited
www.guardianunlimited.co.uk
Independent
www.independent.co.uk
MegaStar ***www.megastar.co.uk***
The Mirror ***www.mirror.co.uk***
The Sun ***www.the-sun.com***
The Times ***www.the-times.co.uk***

NEWS SERVICES

BBC ***news.bbc.co.uk***
CNN ***www.cnn.com***
ITN ***www.itn.co.uk***
NewsNow ***www.newsnow.co.uk***
News Unlimited
www.newsunlimited.co.uk
PA News ***www.pa.press.net***
Reuters ***www.reuters.com/news***

PEOPLE FINDERS

EMAIL ADDRESSES

Bigfoot ***bigfoot.com***
EmailFinder
www.emailfinder.com
People Site ***www.peoplesite.com***
WhoWhere ***www.whowhere.com***
Yahoo ***people.yahoo.com***

PHONE NUMBERS

BT Directory Enquiries
www.bt.co.uk/phonenetuk
Thomson Directories
www.thomweb.co.uk
Yellow Pages ***www.yell.co.uk***

SCIENCE

NEWS AND UPDATES

BBC Science ***news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/sci/tech/default.htm***
Eureka Alert ***www.eurekalert.org***
NASA ***science.nasa.gov***
New Scientist ***www.newscientist.com***
WhyFiles ***whyfiles.news.wisc.edu***

SEARCH ENGINES

AltaVista ***www.altavista.digital.com***
Ask Jeeves ***www.askjeeves.com***
Dogpile ***www.dogpile.com***
Electric Library ***www.elibrary.com***
FAST ***alltheweb.com***
Google ***www.google.com***
HotBot ***www.hotbot.com***
Lycos ***www.lycos.com***
MetaCrawler ***www.metacrawler.com***
Mirago ***www.mirago.co.uk***
Northern Light ***www.nlsearch.com***
Pandia Search Central
www.pandia.com

SHOPPING

ONLINE AUCTIONS

Auction Hunter
www.auctionhunter.co.uk
Auction Universe
www.auctionuniverse.co.uk
Bid4sport ***www.bid4sport.co.uk***
eBay ***www.ebay.co.uk***
eBid ***www.ebid.co.uk***
eSwap ***www.eswap.co.uk***
Eurobid ***www.eurobid.com***
Last Minute
www.lastminute.com
QXL ***www.qxl.com***
What Am I Bid?
www.whatamibid.com

SHOPPING DIRECTORIES

Best of British
www.bestofbritish.com
Buckingham Gate
www.buckinghamgate.co.uk
Centreshop ***www.centreshop.com***
eDirectory ***www.edirectory.co.uk***
Enterprise City
www.enterprisecity.co.uk
IMRG ***shops.imrg.org***
Internet Shopping
www.internetshopping.com
ShopGuide ***www.shopguide.co.uk***
Shoppers Universe
shoppersuniverse.com
Shopping UK
www.internetics.co.uk/shop
ShopSmart ***www.shopsmart.com***
Shops On The Net ***www.sotn.com***
Shop Spy ***www.shopspy.co.uk***
Streets Online ***www.infront.co.uk***
Taxi ***www.mytaxi.co.uk***
TopUKWebsites
www.topukwebsites.com
Virtual Mall ***www.thevirtualmall.co.uk***
UK Max ***www.ukmax.co.uk/shopping***
UK Shopping Zone
ukshoppingzone.co.uk
ValueMad ***www.valuemad.com***

SPORT

FA PREMIERSHIP CLUBS

Arsenal ***www.arsenal.co.uk***
Aston Villa ***www.astonvilla-fc.co.uk***
Bradford City
www.bradfordcityfc.co.uk
Chelsea ***www.chelseafc.co.uk***
Coventry City ***www.ccfc.co.uk***
Derby County ***www.dcfc.co.uk***
Everton ***www.evertonfc.com***
Leeds United ***www.lufc.co.uk***
Leicester City ***www.lcfc.co.uk***
Liverpool ***www.liverpoolfc.net***
Manchester United
www.manutd.com
Middlesbrough ***www.mfc.co.uk***
Newcastle United ***www.nufc.co.uk***
Sheffield Wednesday ***www.swfc.co.uk***
Southampton
www.saintsfc.co.uk/index.htm
Sunderland
www.sunderland-afc.com
Tottenham Hotspur
www.spurs.co.uk

TRAVEL Australia: fun, apart from the snakes, spiders and Australians

Watford ***www.watfordfc.com***
West Ham Utd ***www.whufc.co.uk***
Wimbledon ***www.wfc.co.uk***

SPORT A-Z

Athletics
www.nuff-respect.co.uk
Basketball ***www.nba.com***
Boxing ***www.boxingonline.com***
Cricket ***www.cricinfo.com***
Formula One ***www.itv-f1.com***
Fishing ***www.anglersnet.co.uk***
Football ***www.football365.com***
Golf ***www.golfweb.com***
Hockey ***www.fieldhockey.com***
Martial Arts
www.martial-arts-network.com
Motorsport ***www.autosport.com***
Racing ***www.racingpost.co.uk***
Rugby League ***www.rleague.com***
Rugby Union ***www.scrum.com***
Skiing ***www.complete-skier.com***
Snooker ***www.snookernet.com***
Tennis ***www.tennis.com***

STYLE AND FASHION

MAIN SITES

BeautyLink ***www.beautylink.com***
Cosmopolitan ***www.cosmomag.com***
Elle ***www.ellemag.com***
Fashion And Beauty Internet Association ***www.fbia.com***
Fashionfile ***www.fashionfile.co.uk***
Fashion Mall ***www.fashionmall.com***
FashionNet ***www.fashion.net***
Haburi ***www.haburi.co.uk***
Models.com ***www.models.com***
Salonweb ***www.salonweb.com***
Style Experts ***www.stylexperts.com***
Vogue ***www.vogue.com***

TELEVISION

TOP SHOWS

Big Breakfast
bigbreakfast.channel4.com
Brookside ***www.brookie.com***
Coronation Street
www.coronationstreet.co.uk
EastEnders
www.bbc.co.uk/eastenders
Friends ***friends.warnerbros.com***
Hollyoaks ***www.hollyoaks.com***
Neighbours ***www.neighbours.com***
Jerry Springer ***www.universalstudios.com/tv/jerryspringer***
Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?
www.phone-a-friend.com
X-Files ***www.thex-files.com***

TV COMPANIES

BBC ***www.bbc.co.uk***
Channel Four ***www.channel4.co.uk***
Channel Five ***www.channel5.co.uk***
ITV ***www.itv.co.uk***
ONdigital ***www.ondigital.co.uk***
Sky ***www.sky.co.uk***

TRAVEL

AIRLINES

Air Canada ***www.aircanada.ca***
Air France ***www.airfrance.com***
American Airlines ***www.aa.com***
Britannia
www.britanniaairways.com
BA ***www.british-airways.com***
BM ***www.iflybritishmidland.com***
Buzz ***www.buzzaway.com***
Continental ***www.flycontinental.com***
Easy Jet ***www.easyjet.com***
Go ***www.go-fly.com***
Iberia ***www.iberia.com***
KLM ***www.klmuk.com***
Lufthansa ***www.lufthansa.com***
Qantas ***www.qantas.com.au***
United Airlines ***www.ual.com***
Virgin Air ***www.virgin-atlantic.com***

DESTINATION GUIDES

Australia ***australia-online.com***
Caribbean
www.caribbean-travel.com
France ***www.franceway.com***
Germany ***www.germany-tourism.de***
Greece ***www.areianet.gr/infoxenios***
India ***www.indiagov.org***
Ireland ***www.irelandseye.com***
Italy ***www.travel.it***
Japan ***www.jnto.go.jp***
Lonely Planet ***www.lonelyplanet.com***
Portugal ***www.portugal-web.com***
Ski Club Of Great Britain
www.skiclub.co.uk
Spain ***www.spaintour.com***
UK ***www.visitbritain.com***
US ***www.go-unitedstates.com***

FERRIES

Ferry Savers ***www.ferrysavers.co.uk***
P&O ***www.poef.com/poef/index.htm***
Travel Britain ***www.travelbritain.com/UKPassengerFerries.html***
Travel.World
www.travel.world.co.uk/ferries.htm

RAIL TRAVEL

Euro Railways
www.eurorailways.com
Great Eastern Railway
www.ger.co.uk
Great Western Trains
www.great-western-trains.co.uk
Railtrack ***www.railtrack.co.uk***
Scotrail ***www.scotrail.co.uk***
Trainline ***www.thetrainline.com***
UK Public Transport Information
www.pti.org.uk
Virgin Trains ***www.virgintrains.co.uk***

TRAVEL AGENTS

A2B ***www.a2btravel.com***
Airtickets ***www.airtickets.co.uk***
Bargain Holidays
www.bargainholidays.org
Biztravel ***www.biztravel.com***
Campus Travel
www.usitcampus.co.uk
Cheap Flights
www.cheapflights.co.uk
Deckchair
www.deckchair.com
ebookers ***www.ebookers.com***
Expedia
www.expedia.co.uk
Holiday Wizard
www.holidaywizard.co.uk
Internet Travel Services
www.itsnet.co.uk
Last Minute
www.lastminute.com
STA Travel
www.statravel.co.uk
Thomas Cook
www.thomascook.co.uk
Thomson ***www.thomson-holidays.com***
Trailfinders ***www.trailfinder.com***
Travelocity ***www.travelocity.com***

WEBCAMS

DIRECTORIES

Allcam ***www.allcam.com***
Camcity ***www.camcity.com***
Digital Camera Network
www.dcn.com
Earthcam ***www.earthcam.com***
Webcam Central
www.camcentral.com
WebCam World
www.webcamworld.com
Webviews ***www.webviews.co.uk***

FAVOURITES

AfriCam ***www.africam.com***
Howletts Zoo ***www.howletts.net***
Interactive Model Railroad
rr-vs.informatik.uni-ulm.de
Jennicam ***www.jennicam.org***
Radio 1
www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/inside_r1
Ultimate Taxi
www.ultimatetaxi.com
WalfordCam ***www.bbc.co.uk/eastenders/walfordcam***

WEB CENSORS

Cybersnoop ***www.pearlsw.com***
Cyber Patrol ***www.cyberpatrol.com***
Net Nanny ***www.netnanny.com***
Xcheck ***www.xcheck.net***

WEB DIRECTORIES

About.com ***www.about.com***
4anything ***www.4anything.com***
AOL Netfind ***www.aol.com/netfind***
Excite ***www.excite.com***
Infoseek ***infoseek.go.com***
Liszt (mailing lists) ***www.liszt.com***
LookSmart ***www.looksmart.com***
Open Directory ***www.dmoz.org***
UK Plus ***www.ukplus.co.uk***
WebCrawler
www.webcrawler.com
Yahoo! ***www.yahoo.com***
Yell ***www.yell.co.uk***

I like to know exactly what I'm paying to surf the Internet

☐ Tell me about fixed cost calls to the Internet

Don't tell me, I like the phone bill to surprise me

☐ I'll stick with my big fat phone bill

CUT the expense of running your internet account

Fancy surfing the Internet 24 hours a day, 7 days a week?

With PlusNet's advanced ISP service – and fixed Internet call packages from BT Surftime – you can do it without the giant phone bill.

PlusNet's service costs you only £9.99 per month (VAT included) for unlimited Internet access.

You also get unlimited e-mail addresses, CGI access, fax2E-mail, portal access, unified messaging, e-commerce and reporting tools – all in a vibrant user community.

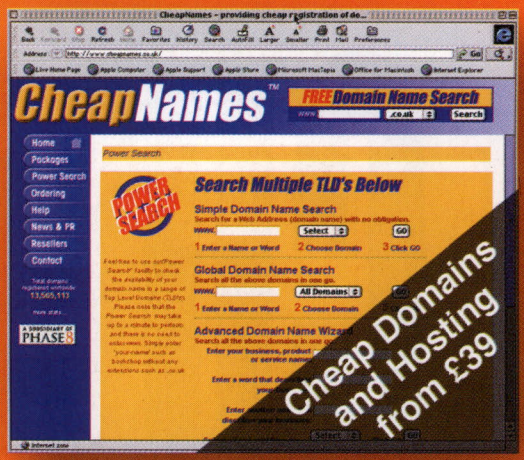
Add BT Surftime for just £19.99 per month (VAT included) and all of your call charges, at any time, are included.

Since PlusNet operate on BT's IP-only network (totally separate to their voice network), you'll also enjoy the most reliable connection around, soon to include ADSL access.

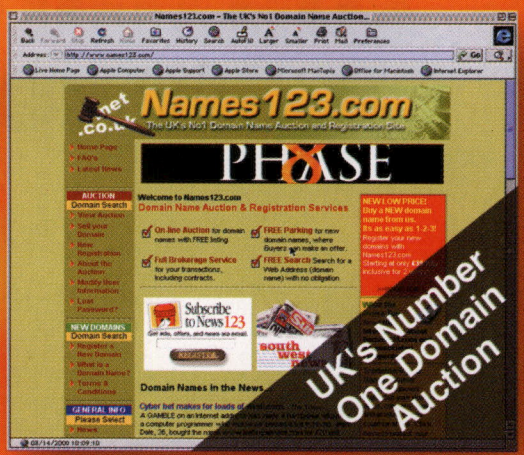
Even better, our customers enjoy a FREE 10 day trial of the PlusNet connection – plus other great offers!

So why not choose the smarter way to connect? To join us now for your free trial, go to **www.plus.net**

plusnet
The smarter way to Internet



www.cheapnames.co.uk



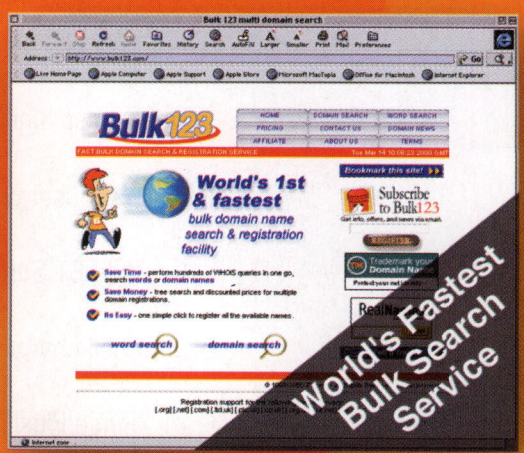
www.names123.com

1st for...

Cheap Names & Hosting

UK Domain Auction

Bulk Search & Registration



www.bulk123.com

PHASE 8

CREATIVE WEB DEVELOPMENT

WARNING: Don't leave it to the **lastminute**!

Register NOW at www.phase8.com for the forthcoming flotation of our profitable group

powered by

freeserve

www.freeserve.com

GET INTO THE SWIM

Women pool their resources with iCircle

How to stay safe on the Web

No.1 for the Internet

Your guide to the best content on the Internet

Campaigning for cats and dogs

Canine, feline and vegetarian Freeserve sites

Get green fingers with Freeserve

How does your garden grow? George knows

16 pages that will change the way you use the Net

The UK's No.1 for the Net

Welcome to Freeserve, the UK's No. 1 for the Internet. Whatever you want from the Internet, you can get it on Freeserve. Our content is second to none, covering every topic you'd want to read about. If you like news, sport, music, chat, travel, money, films, auctions, horoscopes or shopping, you can find these and much, much more on Freeserve Today at *www.freeserve.com*.

Freeserve is the Internet's leader for great content, but that's not all. Almost 2 million people are online as members of Freeserve, the nation's most popular Internet Service Provider (ISP).

Many ISPs have tried to introduce unmetered Internet access, and many people have had to wait for it as a result. You can rely on Freeserve to do as we say rather than make empty promises – and now you can get unmetered access to the Web through Freeserve.

There are three ways of paying for the calls to connect to the Net. **No Ties Freeserve Time** lets you pay as you go, charging for each call. **Off Peak Freeserve Time** gives you unmetered Net access from 6pm until 8am during the week and all day at weekends – for just £4.99 per month. Or for £10 per month, you can have unmetered access 24 hours per day, seven days per week with **Unlimited Freeserve Time**.

We don't charge for the unlimited email addresses we give you. And we'll even give you 15 megabytes of free website space.

Sign up online at *www.freeserve.com* or pick up the CD at Dixons, Currys, PC World, The Link or @jakarta. It's free.

powered by freeserve
www.freeserve.com

EMAIL

Write here, write now

Sending a letter takes ages. Despite the best efforts of the Royal Mail, it can take days or even weeks to send a letter and receive a reply. How would you like to send a letter which got there immediately?

That's the beauty of email, which allows you to send messages round the corner or round the world in seconds, and get the reply just as fast. And with Freeserve, you don't have to pay a penny.

When you sign up with Freeserve, we'll give you an unlimited number of email addresses for free. It's free to send messages, and it's free to receive; all you pay is the cost of the call to connect to the Internet – whether you're writing to Accrington or Auckland.

OUR SITE

Best on the Web

Freeserve isn't just about bringing you free Web space, unlimited free email addresses and a choice of Internet access packages. We're also dedicated to bringing you the very best content on the Internet and gathering it all under one roof: on the Freeserve Today page at *www.freeserve.com*.

The thing to do is to treat Today as your home on the Web by making it your homepage and checking in every day. You see, when you do that you'll get a great digest of all the latest news, weather and sport as it happens – with the chance to explore the events more deeply on the relevant channels.

But it's not all hard news and hard facts on Freeserve. If you like it a little more relaxed but no less interesting, try the feature-packed Life channel. You can track the stars of stage and screen with the Entertainment channel, plan a break with the Travel channel, meet people on our Chat channel or search for a job on the Careers channel. If you have a small business you shouldn't miss the Business section. Or you could try our recently refurbished women's channel at iCircle – see p. x for more details on the latest great new content from Freeserve.

'Treat Today as your home on the Web by making it your homepage and checking in every day'

YOUR SITE

Everyone's doing it...

The Internet is a great soapbox for anyone to get up there and have a say. You can do it to, with a little help from Freeserve. When you sign up as a member of Freeserve, in addition to the free email addresses we'll give you a whopping great 15Mb of space in which to build your own website. It could be about your team, your pets, whatever you want – and it's held on our computers instead of clogging up your PC. If the thought of building a website scares you stiff, remember that there are about 100 million sites out there so it can't be that hard. Turn to p. xii to see some Freeserve members' sites.

Animal magic
Cuddly critters are a popular choice for a website topic. We've got a cat site, a dog site and a vegan site for you to see.
page xii

SPEECHMAIL

When you don't need a modem to get your email

The mobile phone has saved us from having to sit and wait for important calls – we can stay in touch wherever we are. Now that email has become an important medium of communication, there's a danger we could have to sit by our PC instead! However, as ever, Freeserve has the answer.

Speechmail is a clever little idea that allows you to access your email messages over the phone without the need for a computer. And as usual, there's absolutely no charge for Freeserve customers.

All you have to do is sign up to the service at the Web address below, and you'll be given a phone number which you can use to access your mail. You can ring it from any phone – including your mobile. It means that, no matter how important the email you're waiting for, you don't need your modem to check your mail!

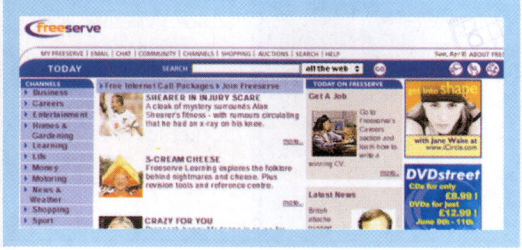
For more details on Speechmail, check the site below. You might not switch on your modem again!
www.freeserve.com/speechmail

CHANNEL GUIDE

Some of the great channels available on Freeserve

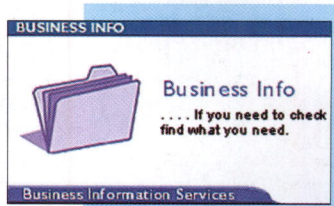
Today

Freeserve has always strived to provide the best content on the Web, with new information and entertainment every month. The end result of this is the new front page at *www.freeserve.com*, which has recently been redesigned to make navigation around the site much easier. The new homepage has been styled as the Today channel, with an exciting mix of topical content and features to enjoy. Go there today!



Auctions

The thrill of bidding for items at bargain prices is no longer confined to auction rooms. By going to FSauctions at *www.fsauctions.co.uk*, you can peruse the wide variety of merchandise on offer and place your bid. It's up to you to decide how high to go!



Business

Do you run a small business, online or off? If so, you could benefit from the Freeserve Business channel. From conference calls to calling cards, you'll find that the Business channel is your one-stop shop for all your needs.

Careers

You're wired, now get hired – not fired. The Careers channel lets you search databases of 70,000 jobs nationwide; you can even apply online, or submit your CV and wait for employers in your area to come to you!

Image Bank

Sorted for sport

powered by freeserve www.freeserve.com

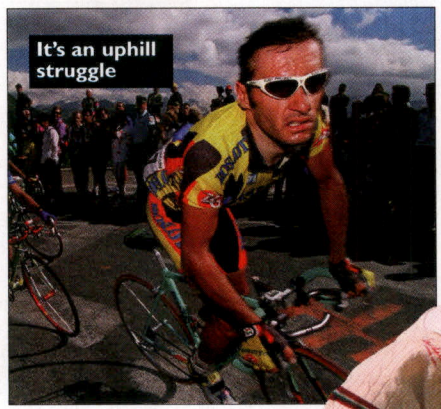
The fastest bowlers, cyclists and drivers feature on Freeserve Sport this month

The summer of sport rolls merrily along on the Freeserve Sport channel. July's another belting month of sporting action, whether you like your games played with bats, clubs or wheels.

Cricket continues to dominate proceedings during July, with the Triangular Tournament bringing England face to face with Zimbabwe and the West Indies. The three sides do battle throughout July, culminating in a grand final at Lord's on Saturday 22 July.

At all matches the Freeserve Speedster will be measuring the bowling speed, and those of you who entered the Speedster competition to guess the speed and bowler of the fastest delivery of the summer will be watching with great interest to see if you can win the tickets to a hospitality box at next summer's Ashes series. If you didn't enter the competition, which is now closed – you should've been paying more attention to this magazine or the *www.freeserve.com* site!

Moving on from fours to plus-fours, **golf** fans will be looking forward to the big one in July: the (British) Open, held at the game's spiritual home of St Andrews. All the top names will be there, including Tiger Woods and Ernie Els, but the home crowds will be rooting for the popular Colin Montgomerie. Larger-than-life 'Monty' has been Europe's No. 1 for seven years, pulling in crowds and making money for the sport and for himself, but he's never yet won a major title.


It's an uphill struggle

From a gentle stroll through the woods to a perspiration-drenched, pedal-powered pursuit: July is also the month of the world's most famous cycle race, the **Tour de France**. Winding through the Gallic countryside from 1 to 23 July, the cyclists will cover more than 3,500 kilometres over 21 gruelling stages. Olympic hero Chris Boardman may be flying the flag for Britain, and you can trace his progress on Freeserve Sport.

As fast as Boardman is, if it's speed that thrills you'll be keeping an eye on the **Formula 1** season. Michael Schumacher and his rivals will pass the half-way point of the season during July with the French GP on 2 July, Austrian GP on 16 July and German GP on 30 July. As we go to press Michael Schumacher is still the man to beat, but Brit David Coulthard is putting a strong run together to challenge the German for the crown.

If you're feeling confident that you know how these events are going to turn out, why not put your money where your mouse is with a bet on them at Place A Bet – through Freeserve Sport.

You see, Freeserve Sport covers all events at *www.freeserve.com/sport*. It's always a winner.

CHANNEL GUIDE

Some of the great channels available on Freeserve

Chat

Freeserve's ever-popular chat service is a great hit. You can use our new 3D chat rooms to get around and explore virtual reality worlds, or even set up your own chatgroups.

Entertainment

The latest releases in the worlds of film and music are all here on the Freeserve Entertainment channel. From Mozart to Moby and Antonioni to *Antz*, it's all in Entertainment.

Learning

From pre-school right through to A-level, Freeserve Education is there to help you through your studies with an interactive learning environment to encourage learning skills.

Life

New from Freeserve, the Life channel is an exclusive features magazine which brings you the latest lowdown on everything that matters, online and off. Whatever you're into, you'll enjoy Life.

Money

Freeserve will help you keep your finances healthy with expert advice. Whether you want savings tips or advice on choosing an ISA, you can keep your pocket full with Freeserve.

All the time in the world

Freeserve Time gives you peace of mind with three different Internet call packages

One of the great things about the Internet is that it's used by all kinds of different people for any number of reasons. Everyone has their own special reason for going online – whether it's to check out the latest chat channels or to research supernovas.

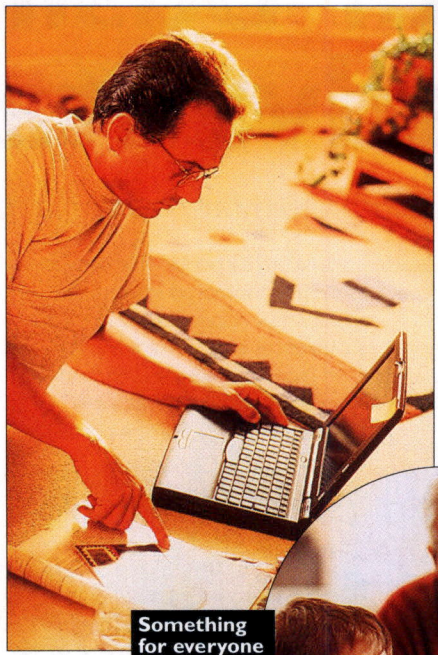
A natural result of this diversity of users is a diversity of use. Some of us will log on and still be there hours later, taking it all in; others will quickly nip on the Net for a matter of minutes before logging off again.

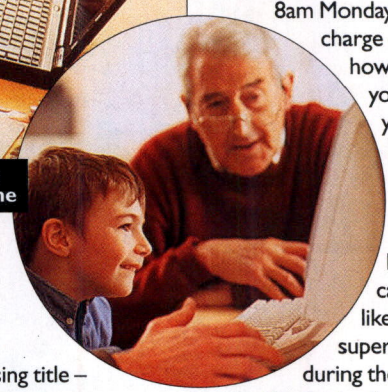
It all adds up to a range of call patterns for different consumers. It's no longer enough to provide one cover-all service which treats everyone as the same, because quite simply they're not. The heart surgeon working 50 hours per week hasn't got the same spare time to peruse the Web that a retired lecturer does; different people have different expectations.

At Freeserve we aim to cover a range a differing needs with a range of different call packages. We've grown to be the UK's No. 1 for the Internet by giving customers what they want – free content, free emails and free Web space – and we aim to do more of the same with regard to call packages.

Hence the dawn of Freeserve Time (*www.freeserve.com/time*). This is an array of three packages to reflect differing needs, all designed to make it as cheap as possible for you to get on the Internet.

Freeserve was the first Internet Service Provider to abandon subscriptions – monthly fees for the privilege of accessing the Internet. This is separate from access call charges, which are collected by your telephone company, and which have been out of Freeserve's hands – until now. Freeserve has come up with a couple of cracking deals which minimise the cost of calling the Internet.

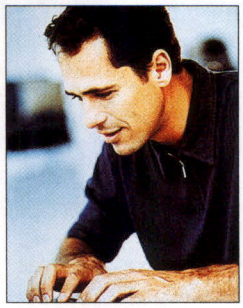




Something for everyone

The first is called **Unlimited Freeserve Time**, which is a promising title – and unlike many ISPs, at Freeserve we deliver on our promises. Unlimited Time gives you just that – 24-hour, 365-day access to the Internet without having to worry about call charges. There's no connection fee or initial charge either.

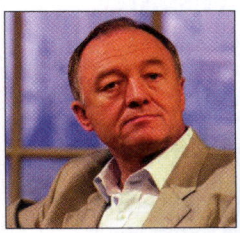
What you do pay is a flat fee of £10 per month, and there's even a couple of options on how to pay it. You can just pay the tenner up front, but if you make more than £10 worth of national or international telephone calls through the Freeserve network, you get unlimited Internet access for nothing!



That might sound implausible, but how's about this: Freeserve will give you money to go online with **Off-Peak Freeserve Time**. A package using SurfTime from BT gives you free Internet calls in the evenings (from 6pm to 8am) and at the weekends (from 6pm Friday to 8am Monday) in return for a monthly charge of £5.99 on your BT bill; however, Freeserve will pay you £1 for every month you're an active Freeserve member using Off-Peak Time. So with this rebate, it's just £4.99 for the equivalent of over 500 hours' unmetered off-peak calls per month – or, if you like, a penny an hour! It's a superb package if you're out during the day, at work or school.

The final call package is the original model. **No Ties Freeserve Time**, as the name suggests, is free of commitment or monthly call-charge flat fees. Great if you're a light user, it means you just pay for the calls you make.

One of these three call packages will suit you down to the ground and give you the best value for money. For more information on them, check out *www.freeserve.com/time*.



News

Get tomorrow's papers today with this superb news service. You'll get all the latest UK and foreign stories, together with business news and a complete rundown of headlines as they happen.

Shopping

The Freeserve Shopping channel can provide flowers or food, a car or a computer. Look out for great deals and savings from SHOP@freeserve and now the new Marketplace retailers.

Sport

Whatever your sport, you'll find it on Freeserve. Football, tennis, cricket, rugby, Formula 1 or golf; you can get the results and follow your heroes on the Sport channel.

Travel

Click on the Freeserve Travel channel for instant access to a database of 70,000 flights and holidays worldwide. There are always sensational last-minute deals on offer.

Women

Women on the Web need look no further than the Freeserve iCircle channel for the latest features, information and advice. See page x for details.

Retna; Empics; PA; Image Bank

Give your business a clear advantage

Freeserve and Barclays team up to launch Clearlybusiness.com, a new portal for small businesses

One of the first ports of call for a small business owner is the bank. It's therefore highly fitting that Freeserve should have got together with Barclays to create a brand new portal, Clearlybusiness.com, purpose-built to cater for the needs of small businesses.

Whether you're helming an established small business or just starting up, you'll find all you need on the new portal. Clearlybusiness.com is dedicated to addressing the key concerns of the small business market, be they cashflow management or ecommerce strategy.

The core ethos of Clearlybusiness.com is to reduce the hassle and remove the cost from doing business for small businesses.

Build a better business

Clearlybusiness.com is a portal which acts as a central resource of tools, products, services, advice and information specifically tailored to help small businesses build, manage and run their affairs more effectively and efficiently. Whatever you need for your small business, you'll find it on the portal.

It's the aim of Clearlybusiness.com to help firms achieve their goals.

You might be wondering if Clearlybusiness.com is designed for you. In fact it's aimed at various types of companies – small businesses, existing established businesses and potential start-ups.

Clearlybusiness.com has a broad appeal across the small business spectrum. If you're just starting up in business you could probably use all the advice and help you can get, and there's plenty of it on the site – learn from the mistakes and successes of others. And even if your business has been sailing merrily along for years, there are still plenty of useful resources on Clearlybusiness.com.

Clearlybusiness.com will provide editorial tips and guidance on what to do, along with diagnostic tools and features. It's all designed to help guide small business managers, owners and key staff members through the various issues that they may have – and to help them come to the correct decision as to where to go next.

www.clearlybusiness.com

'With 1.9 million members, Freeserve is the UK's No.1 for the Internet'

John Pluthero, Chief Executive

NEW ON FREESERVE

Check out some of our great new features

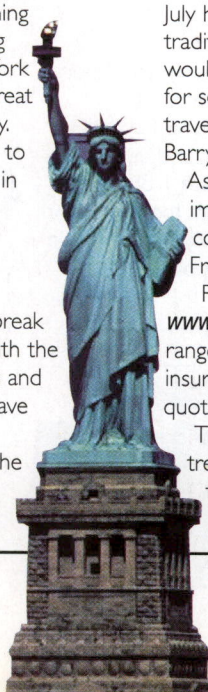
Take a bite out of the Big Apple

What are you up to this weekend? You might be gardening after reading our feature on p.viii, or shopping, or playing sport. But how would you fancy popping over to New York for the weekend? That's the prize on offer in the latest great competition from Freeserve and Online Travel Company.

The lucky winners will be whisked across the Atlantic to the Big Apple itself, spending Friday and Saturday nights in one of the most exciting cities in the world. Maybe you could survey the Manhattan skyline from the top of the Empire State Building or take one of the famous ferries out into the bay to see the Statue of Liberty.

You and a friend or partner can take the weekend's break any time between September 2000 and March 2001, with the exception of December. The prize includes return flights and two nights' accommodation – although you might not have time for slumbering in 'the city that never sleeps'...

For more details, terms and conditions and to enter the competition, check the Freeserve Competition page at *www.freeserve.com/competitions*



Peace of mind on your travels

July has always been a favourite month for going on holiday, a tradition stretching back centuries to the old Wakes Weeks which would see entire towns decamping to the nearest seaside resort for seven days. Those days have gone, and the 21st-century traveller has a far wider choice of destination than Blackpool, Barry Island, Bognor or Bournemouth.

As we visit more exotic locations, it becomes even more important to get decent travel insurance so that you're covered in the event of anything going wrong. And as ever, Freeserve is there to help you out with a suggestion.

Freeserve's insurance partner Insurance Wide, at *www.insurancewide.com*, provides comprehensive cover on a range of insurance policies. You can get the best quotes on travel insurance so you're covered as you travel, but you can also get quotes on insuring your car and home.

The interactive Insurance Wide site will help you out tremendously: when you click on the relevant icon and answer the questions, you'll be given a quote for your reference so you know how much you'll be paying.

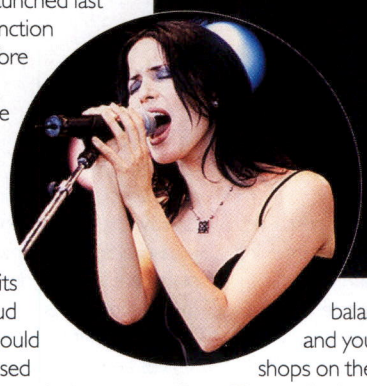
Safe – and sound – with the marbles card

Get yourself a fraud-busting credit card this month and bag yourself a CD – for nothing

The marbles credit card was launched to keep your money safe during online transactions, with an anti-fraud guarantee putting minds at rest. And what better way to enjoy that peaceful frame of mind than with a brand new free music CD?

During the month of July, all new marbles credit card holders will be eligible to collect a completely free CD from Streets Online, up to the value of £20. It's yet another reason to enjoy the benefits of a marbles card.

The marbles card was launched last year by Freeserve in conjunction with HFC Bank, and therefore brings you financial nous coupled with the Freeserve dedication to saving you money. For instance, the interest rate is just 4.5% for your first six months.

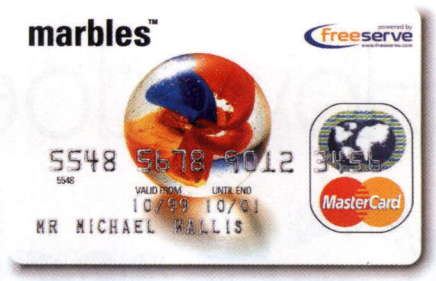


Get some tunes in on your card

However, the main selling point for marbles is its copper-bottomed anti-fraud guarantee. Quite simply, should your card details ever be used fraudulently without your knowledge, you won't have to pay a penny. The marbles card is designed to give peace of mind when shopping online.

The marbles card will open up a new world of online banking for you. You can check your balance and account details online, and you can shop online at all the great shops on the Freeserve Shopping channel. The card's also acceptable in the High Street.

There's no greater indicator of success than popularity, and as such you know you're on a winner here: over 100,000 people are already enjoying the benefits of marbles.



It's incredibly easy to get the card, too: log on to *www.fscard.co.uk* and fill in the plain-English, no-nonsense instructions. You even get to choose the colour of the marble on your card!

The benefits of applying online continue when it comes to the decision. Normally when you apply postally for a credit card it can take a week to hear if you've been accepted. With marbles, you'll have a decision within 60 seconds. You won't even have time to put the kettle on.

So there's never been a better time to get hold of your marbles card – and with all the time you save by applying and shopping online, you'll have more time to enjoy your free CD! For full details go to *www.fscard.co.uk*.

powered by freeserve www.freeserve.com

Pop down to the Marketplace

There's nothing nicer than ambling around a marketplace on a summer afternoon, and now you can enjoy the feeling through your modem with Freeserve Marketplace.

The Freeserve Shopping channel brings together the biggest names in the High Street for your benefit, but the feel is slightly different on Marketplace. It's a home for the smaller, more independent retailers to display their goods – just like a traditional marketplace.

Freeserve Marketplace continues to grow apace. New goodies available include health products if you want to shape up for summer, DIY tools if you want to spruce the house up, air conditioning units if it's all too hot and sticky, beers and barbecue meats for those al fresco moments, or perhaps golf equipment if you fancy a walk with the woods.

There's also new gizmos to help you find what you want; Zoom technology enables the visitor to zoom in and out of products on offer. That might be useful when you check out the new WAP mobile phone store! It's all designed to make your shopping experience as good as possible, so pop down the market today!
www.freeserve.com/marketplace

Win WAP phones with Freeserve

Everyone's talking about WAP phones at the moment, but you might still be a touch reluctant to buy one. Maybe you'd prefer to get your hands on one of the WAP phones we're giving away in another great competition.

You could explore the wonderful world of WAP with a free BTCellnet Freeserve Mobile Internet phone. And it's a pay-as-you-go handset so you know how much you're spending on Web access.

WAP's a world of information in your pocket, the Internet made mobile and sent to your phone. You can get email on the move, information on entertainment events and the latest news and sport headlines – just the type of thing you're used to as a member of Freeserve!

For more details check out *www.freeserve.com/thenetmobile*.

Image Bank; Retna; Newsmakers

How does your Garden grow?

Whether you're a green-fingered gardening guru or a beginner with the beds and bulbs, there's something for everyone on Freeserve Gardening.

Summer's here at last, and for many the best place to be is lounging in the garden, enjoying the grass and flowers in the sun.

Now it may be that you're a keen gardener and you have 'green fingers' to rival Alan Titchmarsh; if so you'll probably be in a flowering paradise. Equally it could be that you rarely venture into the garden except during the summer, and if so your garden may be somewhat less ornamental – if not something of a wilderness.

Whatever your prowess with a trowel, there's something for everyone on the new Freeserve Gardening channel at *www.freeserve.com/gardening*. There's an interactive plant-finder database, a month-by-month planner for the garden, and a detailed guide to the best-known plants.

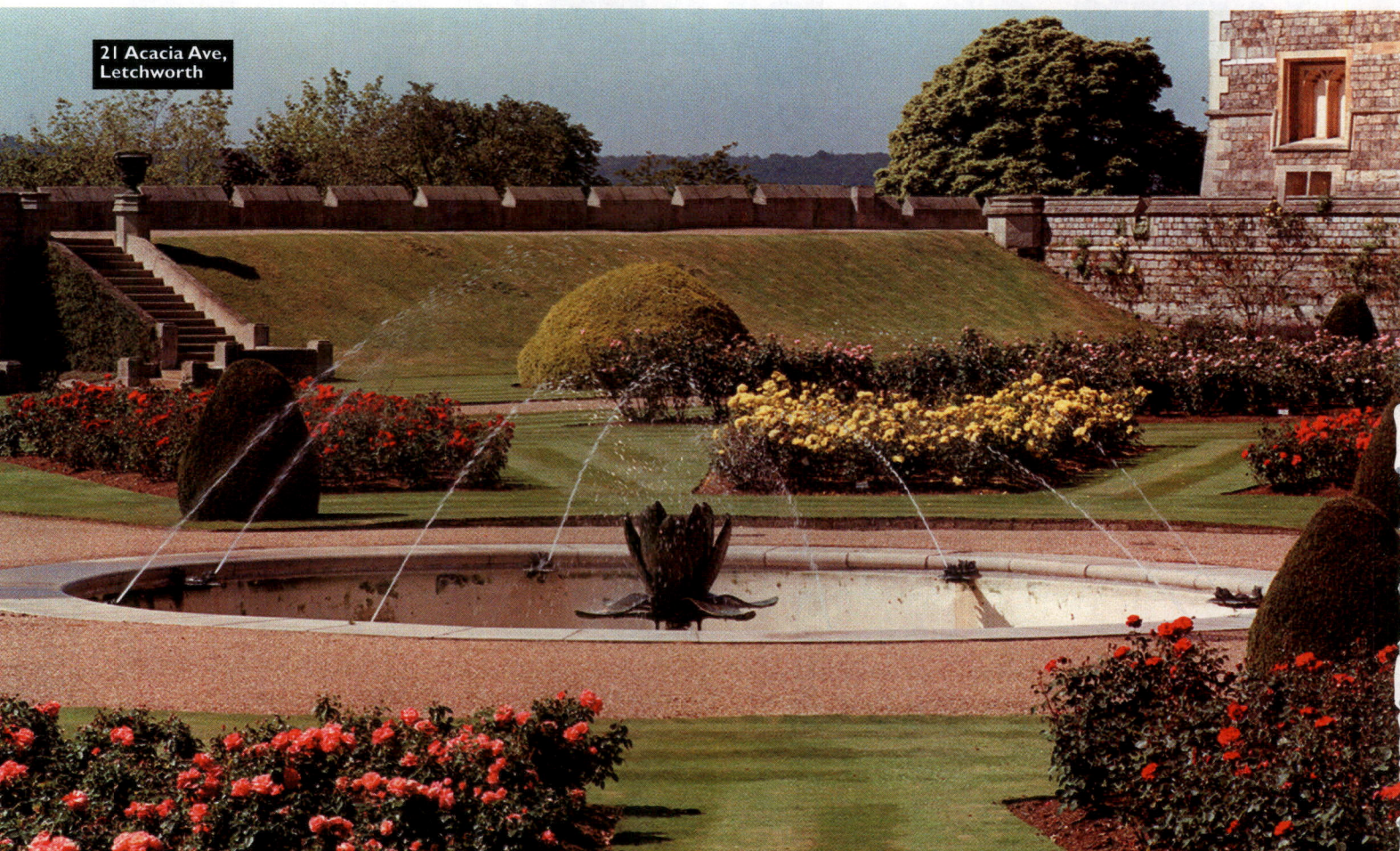
Pick a plant, any plant

The interactive power of the Internet hasn't yet been harnessed to its full potential on gardening sites – until now. The Freeserve Gardening channel includes the first ever fully interactive Plant Finder Database, which was created with help from a team of expert botanists from the Natural History Museum. Far easier than leafing through a weighty tome, the Plant Finder makes it easy to locate the plant you want. There are even two types of search: easy and advanced level. You'll find that plant!

It's quite simply the most comprehensive interactive gardening reference tool ever compiled. There are full details on around 7,000 species, so when users supply basic information about leaf and flower type, colour or growth habit, the Plant Finder provides a list of probable plant species; giving more information will narrow the search down still further. And to please all the different types of gardener, all plants are listed under both their common and their Latin names.

But the Plant Finder isn't just a list of species. It gives advice and planting tips for every conceivable garden situation. You can input the aspect (i.e. direction of the sun) and soil type of your garden, then make a personal preference on the colour and type of flower and the season you're interested in, and the Plant Finder makes a list of suggestions for the type of plant you need.

It's not even as if the Plant Finder blithely spits out a long Latin name and leaves you to it. You get detailed plant profiles – including cultivation techniques – to give you the best possible chance of having a happy, healthy garden.


21 Acacia Ave, Letchworth

Get your gear here

Many gardening sites will give you the information but not the most important thing: the plants. The Freeserve Gardening channel goes beyond advice and into supply with the Garden Centre Superstore, which combines the comfort of hassle-free shopping with the convenience of rapid door-to-door delivery.

Supplying more than 800 different gardening products and 200 types of plants, it could make the conventional garden centre a thing of the past. Once ordered, many of the products can be delivered to your door within 48 hours – allowing you to get them in plenty of time for the weekend so you don't spend half your Sunday traipsing to, round and from a garden centre when you should be out in the garden.

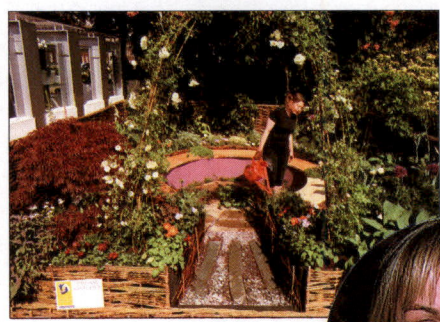
Those of you with a keen eye and a good memory will have noted that the Plant Finder has details on 7,000 species, a far greater number than we can deliver to you at the moment. We're soon going to expand to 6,000 products, but whatever you need, you don't have to be stranded without that precious bud.

If you're looking to get hold of something a little special, we've collated a Nursery Database which contains details of more than 400 specialist grow-houses and nurseries around the country. Regular contact with each nursery ensures that we know what's available when.

Are you experienced?

Beginners can reap the benefit of green-fingered experts from all over the country pooling their knowledge to compile the first ever Internet database of gardening workshops. More than 150 step-by-step lessons have been specially designed to offer a helping hand in the garden.

Because not everyone is a dab hand with the herbacious borders, the workshops are rated for beginner, intermediate and experienced gardeners. Beginners get the lowdown on how to stake a perennial or plan a summer border, while the more adept can learn how to master the art of trellis-work or laying a garden path. Taken as a whole, the workshops cover all aspects of gardening from design through planting to building and maintenance.



Get hold of Michaela's tips online

Don't worry if the garden's a mess; it's all about planning ahead. And as such, the Gardening Year section will help you organise the maintainance of your pride and joy on a month-by-month basis throughout the year. There's seasonal advice and handy tips on the dos and donts of lawn care, pruning and training, plus advice on the best time to sow what you want to grow.

There's also a great directory, Essential Plants, which gives practical information on how to cultivate the 50 most popular families of garden plants – from heather to honeysuckle and lilys to lilacs.

Get your garden kitted out

See how it's done

If you fancy a bit of background or a touch of inspiration, the Gardening channel can help you out there too thanks to two more databases: gardening history and gardens to visit.

The Gardening History database, unique to the Gardening channel, contains a comprehensive record of gardening styles and famous practitioners throughout history. Whether you're a fan of Italian renaissance or contemporary landscape designs, you'll find it all here.

There's nothing like seeing a masterpiece to give you impetus, and the database of gardens to visit will help you do that. More than 650 famous gardens both in the UK and abroad are featured, giving you lots of ideas for where to gain inspiration. A visual review of each garden tells you about themed planting schemes and unique features – plus of course a location map so you can join the three million people who visit UK gardens each year.

The front page of the new gardening site

Ask the experts

Still need more inspiration? Try the monthly magazine 'Fresh Ideas', which is stuffed full of gardening brainstorms from some of the best writers in the UK. You can take advice from panel of people who know their onions: Christopher Lloyd, owner of the celebrated garden at Great Dixter; Andy Sturgeon, GMTV garden pundit and author billed as the new Alan Titchmarsh; garden doctor Stephen Anderton, who writes for The Times and regularly guests on Radio 4's Gardeners' Question Time; Rosemary Verey, a garden designer to the rich and famous; and Michaela Strachan, the bubbly TV presenter. Read their views every month in 'Fresh Ideas'.

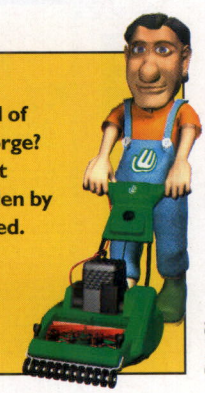
If it all goes wrong, you can email your gardening dilemmas to George (see the box). The Gardening channel has linked up with the Professional Gardeners Guild to provide a panel of gardening experts who will be on hand to offer one-to-one advice. Just email your query or problem and a response will be sent back within 24 hours.

www.freeserve.com/gardening

powered by freeserve
www.freeserve.com

Advice, by George

Gardeners of all abilities will be glad of assistance from George. Who's George? He's a virtual gardener, a real expert who'll help you out around the garden by pinpointing the information you need. Whether it's identifying plants, finding a nursery or explaining gardening jargon, George is your man to set you straight.



Retna; PA

Women on the Web

powered by freeserve www.freeserve.com

More and more women are using the Internet for careers advice, information, travel and shopping. And it's all on www.iCircle.com.

Women are finding more content than ever on the Internet which is directly relevant to their lives. As a result, more and more women are joining the Web-watching masses – and discovering the joys of the Internet.

These new Internet users want information and entertainment which fits their lifestyle. And more are discovering that the best place to find that content is on ***www.iCircle.com***, the UK's No. 1 for women. This month we'll look at some of that content, starting with the new careers channel.

Careering along

The new careers channel aims to encourage and inspire women to achieve their potential and enjoy their working lives. Whether you're aiming to reach the top of the tree or to work part-time from home while looking after the kids, iCircle will help you out – for free.

It might be that the kids are now at school and you've got the time for a full-time career again; maybe you want to go back into your old job, or maybe retrain and try something new. Maybe you're scaling down your hours to spend more time at home. Whatever's happening in your life, the iCircle careers channel will help you out.

Mentor agility

However, it's not a site that you only visit when you want a new job. Obviously, that will be the reason for most people to come to the careers channel, but you can also get advice on your current position – from those who really know.

We all have people we look up to in our jobs and whose paths we'd like to follow – mentors, in short. iCircle is encouraging women who want help with their career to seek the advice of mentors on our discussion board. Women who have already achieved in their careers will match themselves up with less experienced women who want to be mentored; the idea is to spend, say, 30 minutes per week online 'talking' about issues arising from the workplace. It's a free service that could lead to career success and happiness.

iCircle www.iCircle.com

Work, rest and play

The iCircle Careers channel works holistically: that is, it takes an overall view of women at work and their lives. Work isn't something that's separate from your life, it's a central part of it and you need to be happy with it. So the Careers channel will cover everything you chat about with your workmates at the pub or wine bar, and more besides.

Work's not a four-letter word: we want you to enjoy it, so we've included a fun section called Time Out with jokes and quizzes for you to enjoy, perhaps at lunch. There's also a section called Get a Life which helps you achieve a balance between work and life without getting stressed out.

It's got the lot

As you'd expect from a careers service, there's tons of no-nonsense but friendly advice on CVs, interviews, salaries and the like. You can read first-hand success stories from women who can tell you what you need to know.

It's the depth and range of features that makes the iCircle Careers channel so impressive. For instance, there's a work-smarter section which includes features on managing your boss, organising your day and maximising your time. There'll also be a section devoted to part-time, portfolio and home-working, and self-employment – be it as a flying freelancer or setting up your own business.

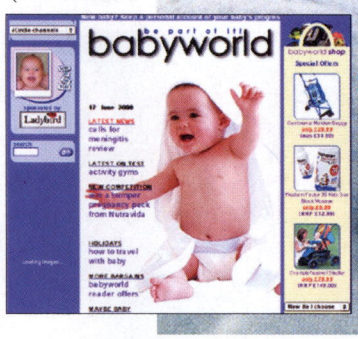
There's a section on your rights at work, written by a female lawyer. There's also a part of the site designed to help working parents, stuffed full of childcare options and advice. Add in discussion boards, ask-the-expert features and it's the best careers service on the Internet.

Child's play at Babyworld

Size matters, even when you're discussing babies. Babyworld is the biggest online parenting site in the UK, collecting together an astonishing 2,600 pages of advice, help, news and community activity under one roof. No wonder Babyworld receives over 5,000 visits every day!

As popular as it already is, Babyworld is only going to get more popular since the launch of an online shop, with more than 750 product lines covering everything from teats to travel systems.

The most popular goods at present are bulky items like car seats, pushchairs, buggies and travel systems – not surprisingly, as these are the last things you want to carry when you're also carrying a baby! Anything bought on Babyworld is delivered between the hours of 4pm and 9pm so you're not hanging about, and delivery is free for orders over £75 (it's less than a fiver for anything up to £75, no matter how much you order).



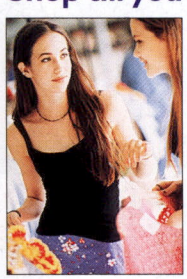
Not that it's easy to spend £75 on Babyworld: prices are typically five or 10 percent cheaper than high street retailers, while there are often special offers which can slice up to 40 percent off the price. And the payment is through the Worldpay secure system, while deliveries are carried out by Securicor Omega – so you have nothing to worry about!

But that's not all: there are plans afoot to double the number of products! Every expectant mother and new mum hates shopping for heavy and bulky goods like baby food, washing powder and nappies, so Babyworld will deliver them to your door for you. It's child's play! ***www.babyworld.co.uk***

babyworld.co.uk

babyworld.co.uk

Shop till you drop

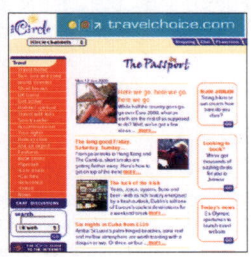


It's important to be able to buy what you want. iCircle realises this, and as such has just relaunched its shopping channel. There are loads of new features, all designed to offer a better online shopping experience.

For instance, every week the Editor suggests a personal choice of best buys from the whole of the site. And of course there'll be a whole host of giveaways, special offers and competitions.

One of the most fun aspects of shopping is getting advice from your friends; there's even a version of this on iCircle's shopping section with impartial guides to selecting certain kinds of products. Indeed, the community aspect is still as important as ever – users can become club members, reviewers and testers, which even entitles them to discounted goods. And a series of live events like wine tasting and chats are to be hosted by experts and celebrities. You can get it all with iCircle shopping!

It's better to travel



Fancy a free trip to Barbados? That's the prize offered by The Passport (iCircle's travel channel) and OTC (the Online Travel Company) in a great competition – a week for two at the Almond Beach Club in Holetown, Barbados, worth £3,000 in total. For full details, and to enter, get yourself along to ***www.thepassport.co.uk***.

While you're there, you'll have the chance to appreciate the usual strong content. There's an awfully big adventure in the Galapagos Islands, a resort report from Turkey, 10 gemlike UK beaches and an assessment of just how dangerous adventure holidays are. There's also a look at staying healthy on the road.

Elsewhere on The Passport you can find quizzes, competitions, discussion boards on hen night etiquette, book reviews, expert advice and lots of ideas for where to go. You'll like the site so much, you might be tempted not to leave your computer behind!

powered by freeserve
www.freeserve.com

Image Bank

All creatures great and small

Not all ISPs give you 15 megabytes of free Web space to do with as you want. Freeserve does. Here we look at three animal-friendly member sites.

The Cat Basket

Of all our four-legged friends, it's perhaps cats who inspire the most fervent devotion – literally so in ancient Egypt, where cats were treated as gods. In fact, The Cat Basket site kicks off with a quote from Mark Twain saying 'If man could be crossed with a cat it would improve man, but it would deteriorate the cat'.

That level of adoration is common on this site, maintained by Freeserve members Richard and Frances Lowdon. For instance, when perusing the photo section of the site you're faced with the difficult choice between 'Funny Cat Photos' and 'Cute Cat Photos' – and that's before you get on to the video section. You can also download wallpapers and icons for a feline feel to your desktop!

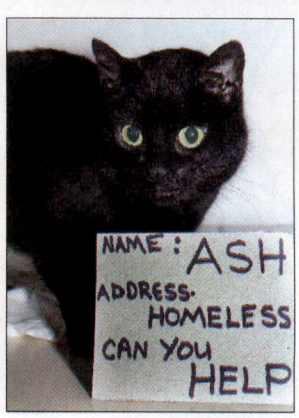
There's an informative factual section which details the history of cats as pets, from being revered in ancient Egypt and Rome through less wonderful times – in the 15th Century, Pope Innocent VIII decreed that all cat-worshippers be burned as witches. The site also includes a list of famous cat lovers (Queen Victoria, Albert Einstein, Winston Churchill and several other luminaries) and even some famous cats: do you remember Humphrey the Downing Street cat?

If you're a fan of records, you can find out about the largest, smallest and oldest cats in the world, and there are dozens of stories related to cats. Meanwhile, the book review section starts with a cute cat cuddling up in a postal package before going on to review a dozen cat books.

Frances and Richard also explore the world of animation – there's a snowglobe in which a contented cat watches the fish swim by, and a few stereograms – Magic Eye-type pictures which reveal suitably feline background images. Your cat will wonder why you're staring so intently at the screen!

www.thecatbasket.freeserve.co.uk

A cat and a hat – both winners



Pussies galore on the Web

powered by freeserve
www.freeserve.com

The English Shetland Sheepdog Club

There's a great gulf between cat-lovers and fans of dogs, and one of the arguments often used by the canine club is that dogs can be trained to do useful things (to which the feline faction replies that part of a cat's charm is that you can't train it to do anything!). This site is devoted to the intelligent and beautiful Shetland sheepdog, and stands as a good example of what you can do with your 15Mb of space if you're part of a club, society or organisation.

Of course, dog-lovers are just as capable of waxing lyrical about their pets as cat-fanciers: the official Kennel Club definition of a Shetland sheepdog describes it as a 'long-haired working dog of great beauty, free from cloddishness and coarseness... shapeliness of head and sweetness of expression combine to present the ideal'.

Webmaster Tony Bridge keeps the site spick and span, detailing upcoming shows at which the finest examples of the breed can be seen. You can also click on to the results and photographs from recent shows to see the proud winners and their beaming owners.

If you fancy joining the club, there are details of how to get on board plus invitations to conferences. And there's even a section devoted to the training of judges if you think you have a fine eye for the breed!

www.essc.freeserve.co.uk

Lassie: film-star good looks

Can you do better?

Now that you've seen these three sites, you might have an idea for what to cover on the 15Mb of free Web space that every Freeserve member receives. You might also think you can do better than these sites. So what's stopping you? Become a member at *www.freeserve.com* or pick up a CD from Dixons, Currys, PC World, The Link or @jakarta – and get building!

You don't have to go this far

Vegan London

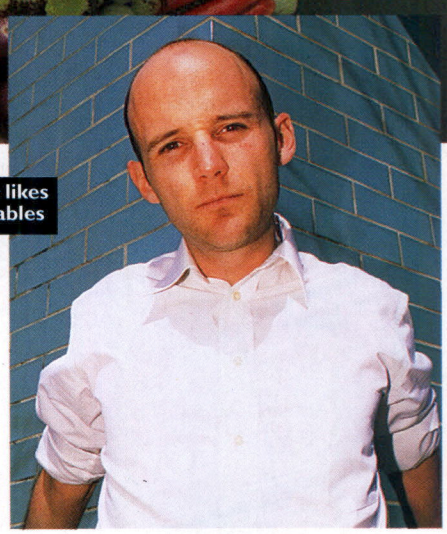
Some might say that it's a bit strange to cuddle a cat or dote on a dog and then chomp on a steak. Vegans seek 'to avoid exploiting animals for any purpose – we don't eat meat, chicken, fish, eggs or dairy products; we also do not wear leather, wool, silk or other animal-derived products.'

Brian Jacobs and Julie Rosenfield run Vegan London, a site dedicated to veganism in the capital. They were inspired by the book *Vegetarian London* and refined the concept to suit their own, more specific beliefs; the 15 megabytes of free website space provided to each member of Freeserve proved ample for them to set up a site about it. Perhaps they were also inspired by the London Vegans homepage at *www.londonvegans.freeserve.co.uk*!

The site they've created is a veritable treasure-trove of information and links. For a start, there are two dozen restaurants at which customers can ask for vegan food without being stared at blankly. There are also contact details for raw food centres in the capital, places to buy non-leather shoes and guesthouses which are accommodating to vegans.

The vegan viewpoint is expounded in a factsheet which discusses scientific experimentation upon animals, and there are links to animal rights groups in and around London. But it's not all hard-hitting – you can also buy the latest CDs from famous vegans such as Bryan Adams and Moby!

www.veganlondon.freeserve.co.uk



Moby: likes vegetables

PA; Retna; Kobal

Savvy, secure and safe

Like many a holiday destination, the Internet is a safe place – especially if you take a few simple, common-sense precautions.

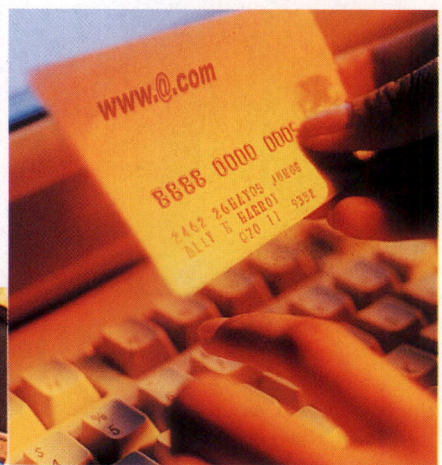
The Internet opens up a wonderful world of opportunities to learn, have fun, meet new people and buy more goods than you'd find in any High Street. It's an exciting new place to be, but as with any unfamiliar terrain you may be a bit nervous about how safe it is. Don't worry: we're here to tell you how you can stay safe and secure online with Freeserve.

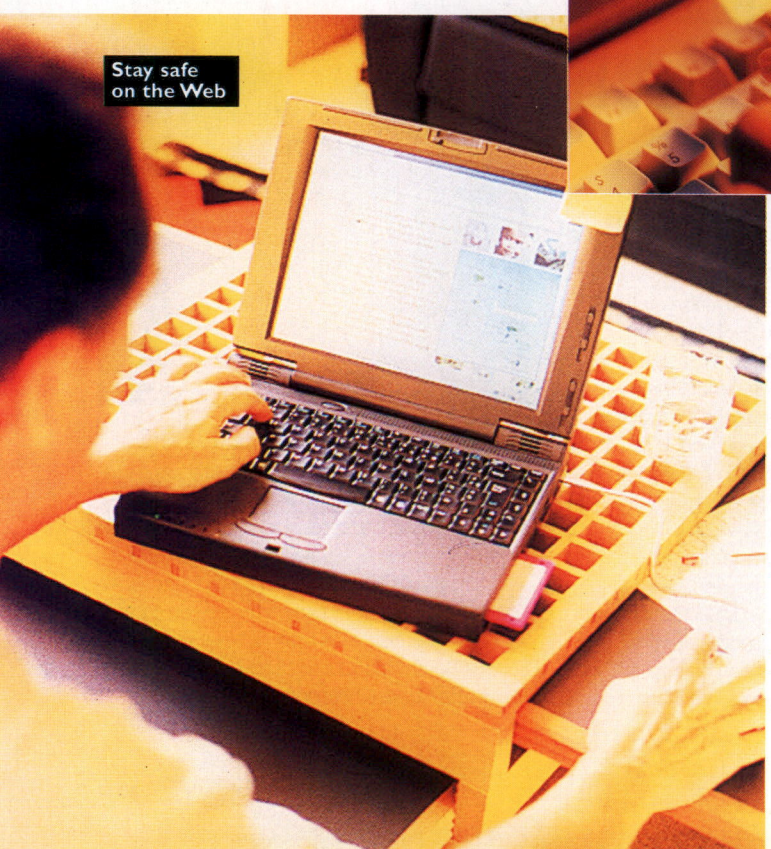
The area of greatest concern for most wary Web-watchers is money. We all have natural, and quite reasonable, concerns about giving financial details such as credit card numbers over the Internet. But there are certain procedures in place to protect you, and a few common-sense rules you should employ to keep your money safe.

•The fraud squad

Internet fraud does happen, but not as routinely as you might think. Occurrences of it are jumped upon by the press and held up as evil examples, despite the fact that you're just as likely to encounter fraud in the offline world – who knows what happens when you pay a restaurant bill and your card disappears, or when you give details over the phone? What Web fraudsters will prey upon is naivety, so be savvy and you'll be safe.

For instance, if you didn't like the look of a dodgy dealer selling stuff from a suitcase you wouldn't give him your credit card details, would you? Equally, don't be too hasty on Internet sites you've just ambled into. Keep your card close to your chest until you've had a good look around the site and discovered who runs it (preferably with a registered postal address as well as a Web address).





Stay safe on the Web

You should make sure the seller has an encryption facility. That might sound like something to do with an Egyptian mummy, but in fact it's a page which is made secure so your details are safe from prying eyes.

•Just looking, not buying

Browsers can be helpful, too. Microsoft and Netscape browsers can tell you whether the page you're entering is secure or not; if this function is switched on you'll be well aware of it because it will flash up every time you submit details on a Website. You should see a closed-padlock symbol in the status bar at the bottom of your browser if the page is secure; if you don't, and you're not satisfied with the safety of the site, then put your card away.

Of course, all this is irrelevant on Freeserve. Every single one of our partners on the SHOP@freeserve channel has to sign up to the Freeserve Promise which pledges to bring all of our customers security, choice, privacy, quality and value for money. (See the box for more details on the Freeserve Promise.)

•Use your marbles

And now you can get protection from fraud

Freeserve Promise

All SHOP@freeserve traders have to sign up to the Freeserve Promise, which has six main points:

SECURITY – Freeserve guarantees you a safe shopping experience

CHOICE – A selection of retailers from High Street to online brands

QUALITY & VALUE FOR MONEY – SHOP@freeserve has a wide variety of products at competitive prices

CUSTOMER SERVICE – All our retailers are committed to maintaining excellent service

PRIVACY – All retailers work with the Data Protection Act to safeguard the customer's privacy

WORLD WIDE WEB – Our marbles credit card is guaranteed against fraud

with the marbles credit card, launched by Freeserve and HFC Bank. It has a copper-bottomed safe shopping promise: in the unlikely event that your marbles card should ever be used fraudulently without your knowledge, you won't pay a penny.

Another good thing about marbles is that you can apply online and you'll get a decision within 60 seconds. No fuss, no long forms, no hanging about, and then no fraud at the end of it. Check it out at *www.freeserve.com/money*.

•Happy talking

Shopping isn't the only area where it's best to keep your wits about you. Online chat is taking off in a big way, with people from all over the world finding subjects in common and swapping the latest news in dedicated chatrooms. But here, as elsewhere, it's best not to get carried away.

The vast majority of chat enthusiasts are decent people, but you should always be wary. Chatrooms may or may not be moderated – that is, presided over by a supervisor who cuts out unwanted material. Once again, you should stick to sites you know and trust. If you go on to a site with dodgy subject matter you might be subjected to a few dodgy people!

Don't give out your personal details willy-nilly – one of the great things about chat in the Web is its anonymity, but even if you use your real name it doesn't mean other people are. It's tempting to meet fellow chatters in the flesh, and the number of Web-spun weddings is testimony to the fact that these meetings can have very happy endings. However, don't give out your address or home number, and perhaps it's better to arrange the initial meeting as part of a larger group of like-minded friends.

•Not for kids

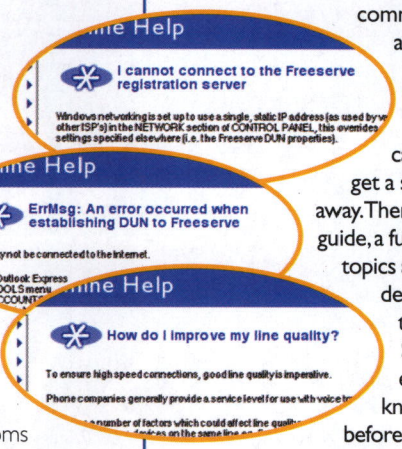
If you have a young family and you don't want their eyes to flicker across the Internet's more risqué sites, you can enlist help. There are several 'Net Nannies' which prevent admission to sites containing, say, certain words; you can choose which words go on the blacklist.

If this is a concern, look around to find one you like. There's Cybersnoop at *www.pearlsw.com*, Cyber Patrol at *www.cyberpatrol.com*, Xcheck at *www.xcheck.net* and Net Nanny itself at *www.netnanny.com*. And don't forget you can turn it off with a password when the kids have gone to bed!

powered by freeserve www.freeserve.com

Online help

We've put together an awesome set of answers for all your technical queries. It's available on our website – and it's free!

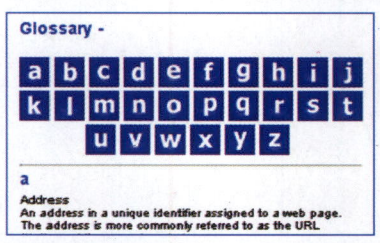


What are my options?

If you're new to the Net, Freeserve is committed to making it as easy as possible for you to get online. We've designed the help section on the Freeserve website so you can turn to Freeserve and get a straight answer, straight away. There's a complete content guide, a full alphabetical index of topics and a find function – all designed to take you straight to the answer you need. Separate sections deal with everything you need to know to avoid problems before set-up, and tell you what to expect as you begin to install the software from the CD-ROM onto your machine. It really is that simple!

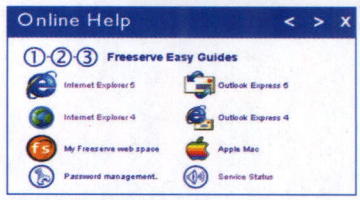
How does online help work?

It's easy! There are four main sources of information. Read through the descriptions below and you'll soon see which best suits the type of query you have. Then connect to Freeserve, visit the help section and get all your questions answered quickly.



The Glossary

If there's an Internet expression you don't understand, turn to our glossary first. It's more than likely to be there.



The Easy Guides

If there's an area of your Net use that is causing you difficulty, turn to our Easy Guides for a complete solution. You'll find answers sorted by subject.

Questions and Answers

If there's a specific question you need answered, turn to our Q&A section for rapid help. First select the general area from our drop-down menu, then a specific question. You may find your question has already been answered.

Contacts

If you still need help, you can email our support staff. They're the same people who staff our phone helpdesks, and they're trained to deal with your queries. Direct email addresses are listed on the contacts page. They'll be happy to help you!

How do I find answers on the CD?

Alternatively, there's also a fully comprehensive Help feature on the Freeserve start-up CD-ROM. When you put the CD in your machine you'll be given four options. The help button takes you to a comprehensive set of instructions to enable you to get online with Freeserve.

Phoneline help

Our experts are on call 24 hours a day

Using Freeserve's online help couldn't be simpler, but from time to time you might have a direct question for one of our experts. To help you get the most out of your connection, Freeserve's Technical Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Make sure you've consulted our online help before you call, as you may find we've already answered your question. If not, our trained staff can provide you with instant answers in plain English on a range of Internet subjects. Calls cost 50p per minute.

PC Support 0906 2517517 Mac 0906 7234000

Image Bank

there are lots of Internet offers, but now Freeserve actually pays you

You'll see the advantage of using Freeserve when you register for Freeserve Off Peak using SurfTime from BT. We'll give you a £1 rebate off the BT SurfTime charge of £5.99 every month that you stay online with Freeserve Off Peak. That's over 500 hours of free off peak Internet time every month. It's yet another reason why it pays you to join the UK's No. 1 for the Internet. REGISTER NOW at www.freeserve.com/time

be freeserve
www.freeserve.com

THE UK's No. 1 FOR THE INTERNET

All applications are subject to Terms of Use online and the offer is available to BT customers only. Freeserve Off Peak uses BT SurfTime charged at £5.99 per month, payable to BT.

Sign up online or pick up a free CD at any branch of

Dixons PC WORLD THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE Currys The Link @jakarta

stepbystep

This month: the latest in flat-screen monitors, all the tools you'll need to get your business online, and our guide to the worlds of email, browsers and newsgroups

Your technical problems well sorted with our easy-to-follow guide to the Net

WHAT IS THE INTERNET?

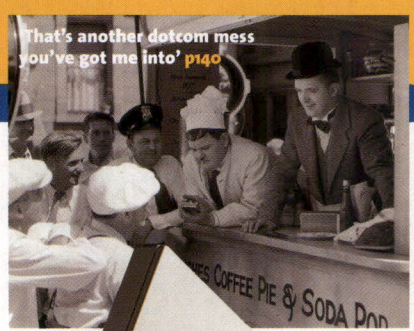
The Internet is a huge global network of computers, with literally millions of machines connected together across the planet.

HOW DO I GET ON IT?

All you really need is a computer, a modem, an Internet Service Provider (ISP) and a telephone line.

WHAT CAN I DO THERE?

1 **Surf the Worldwide Web.**
2 Send someone an email.
3 **Take part in a newsgroup discussion.**
4 Make friends and get chatting with people from all over the world.



That's another dotcom mess you've got me into' p140

CONTENTS

132 CHOOSING AN ISP
Confused by all the providers out there? Consult our guide...

136 HARDWARE
We look at the latest in computer wannahaves – flat-screen monitors

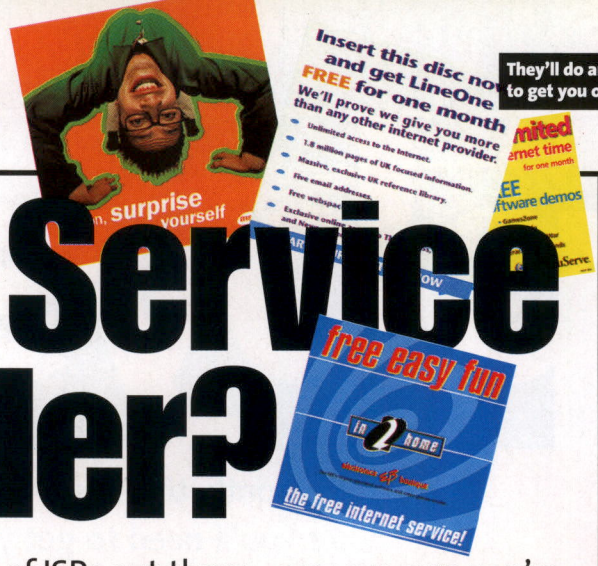
140 BUSINESS TOOLS
How to get your business online – and make it a success

144 BROWSERS
Explore all of your alternatives

146 EMAIL
Find out how to keep in touch here

148 NEWSGROUPS
Meet fellow-minded friends through the world of newsgroups

The future's flat: the best new monitors p136



They'll do anything to get you online

What Service Provider?

August 2000 There are loads of ISPs out there – are you sure you're with the one that's best for you? Find out using our handy guide

What is an ISP?

An Internet service provider, or ISP, is a company that connects you to the Internet. All you need do is exploit the provider's permanent Net connection by connecting to it.

Get the best ISP deal

Right now, literally hundreds of ISPs are vying for your business – which is great news for consumers. But to help you make a truly informed decision, we've tested the best service providers on the market.

Below, you'll find our ratings for the current crop of the best ISPs looking to connect you. There are several companies that are now offering completely free access – and that includes the price of the phone call that connects you to the Internet. LocalTel pioneered this service back in the spring with the launch of Screaming.Net. Since then several companies have started to offer free calls to the Net at certain times of the day. CallNeto800 has also launched and is offering completely free access at any time of the day. This new breed of ISP is set to change the landscape of Net access in the UK, as several other service providers investigate the possibility of offering completely free access in a bid to keep up with new trends. In other words, the future couldn't be brighter for Net consumers, as the price of getting online continues to go down.

Call costs

It's worth checking how much you'll be paying for the phone calls that connect you to the Net. Apart from the new breed of free services, nearly every ISP charges local call rates. For BT customers, this means 4p/min on weekdays between 8am-6pm; 1.5p/min during off-peak times, and 1p/min at the weekend. Check with your phone company.

Speeding up

To say things are only going to get faster is an understatement. BT is due to roll out its ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) in July. It will offer an 'always on' high speed connection to the Net with data delivery speeds of 10-40 times a conventional modem. At the moment, most modems operate at 56kbps (kilobits per second) or less. For more information, see page 143.

BEGINNER'S TIP

Put the phone number you use to dial up to the Internet on your BT Friends and Family list.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Set up several free accounts. If for any reason you cannot connect to one provider, simply try another one. There's no limit to how many accounts you have.

ADVANCED TIP

Consider installing an extra phone line. It means you can have one for the phone and one for your modem, so you can use the Internet as much as you like.

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

ISP NAME	WEB ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF SERVICE
AngliaNet Limited	www.anglianet.co.uk	Dial-up, web hosting and design for home and business users	Unlimited
AOL	www.aol.co.uk	A large ISP offering proprietary software to try to make connecting painless	Unlimited
Aviators Network	www.aviators.net	An ISP designed with aircraft-related content for the pilot and the enthusiast	Unlimited
BREATHE FREE	www.breathe.co.uk	Well-established free ISP. Easy-to-use site design	Unlimited
Btclick.com FREE	www.btclick.com	The free Internet service from BT	Unlimited
BT Internet	www.btinternet.com	Another Internet arm of BT, offering a full access package	Unlimited
Bun FREE	www.bun.com	The free ISP offering of *The Sun* newspaper	Unlimited
Cable and Wireless Lite FREE	www.cwcom.net	Free Net access for CW customers	Unlimited
CALLNET FREE	www.callnetuk.com	Innovative free ISP offering enhanced Web-based services	Unlimited
CIX	www.cix.co.uk	The Compulink Information eXchange. Provides Internet conferencing accounts	Unlimited
ClaraNET Ltd	www.clara.net	Subscription-based ISP with a range of account options to suit any needs	Unlimited
Compuserve	www.compuserve.com	Long-standing ISP which offers proprietary software to aid ease-of-use and level of service	Unlimited
Connect Free FREE	www.connectfree.net	One of the very first free ISPs	Unlimited
CYBERphile Internet	www.cyberphile.co.uk	Business-oriented, Midlands-based provider. Specialists in leased lines, LANs, firewalls, ISDN etc	Unlimited
Dabsol FREE	www.dabsol.net	Free ISP with online sign-up help and comprehensive features	Unlimited
Direct Connection	www.dircon.net	Home and business ISP offering global roaming among their services	Unlimited
Easynet Ltd	www.easynet.net	Subscription-based dial-up service. Winner of best European ISP at this year's ISPA awards	Unlimited
EidosNet FREE	www.eidosnet.co.uk	EidosNet is brought to you by Eidos, publishers of *Tomb Raider* and other great games	Unlimited
Enterprise plc	www.enterprise.net	Subscription-based ISP with a host of features including game and news servers	Unlimited
F9 Free FREE	www.f9.net.uk	Free ISP from previously subscription-only service Force 9	Unlimited
Firstnet Services Ltd	www.firstnet.co.uk	Business Internet solution provider	Unlimited
Free Internet FREE	www.free-internet.co.uk	Free access, free mail and Web space. Comprehensive service in a neat package	Unlimited
FREENET FREE	www.freenet.co.uk	More free access with a gaming bias. Online auto sign-up and newsgroups add to the interest	Unlimited
Free Online FREE	www.free-online.net	Straightforward free ISP offering news and email	Unlimited
Freeserve FREE	www.freeserve.net	Free provider from the Dixons Group of companies	Unlimited
Free to You FREE	www.freezyou.co.uk	No-frills free ISP with online sign-up	Unlimited
Freewire FREE	www.freewire.net	Free ISP with no sign-up requirements	Unlimited
Freezone FREE	www.freezone.co.uk	A free ISP offering the usual package in a smart format	Unlimited
Gateway 2000 FREE	www.ukgateway.net	An ISP service from the hardware retailers of the same name. Packaged with Gateway computers	Unlimited

ISPs explained Using our easy-to-follow guide

FREE CONNECTIONS
There are now many companies that will get you on to the Internet without charging a subscription fee – the only thing you pay for is the price of the phone call that connects you.

SUBSCRIPTION SERVICES
Despite the plethora of free ISPs springing up, there are still many which charge a flat monthly fee. These generally offer free technical support; most free ISPs charge by the minute.

CONTENT PROVIDERS
Content providers also charge to get you online, but provide exclusive content to members, and a sense of 'community'.

How the tables work

Description
A brief description of the services offered by the ISP in question.

Type of service
Tells you whether there is any restriction on how often you can use the Internet.

Phone number
The number to ring if you want to sign up.

Email addresses
Some service providers give you only one email address, others provide as many as you want.

Content
Outlines whether the service provider in question provides its own content and whether it is exclusive to its users.

Macintosh support
Not all service providers offer software and technical support for Macs, preferring to concentrate on PCs – so be sure to check this column out if you're an Apple user.

Web space
If you are interested in designing your own Web page, most Internet Service Providers will give you space to store it on. 2Mb should be enough for most people's requirements.

Set-up fee
Some ISPs charge a fee to open an account.

Monthly charge
If you don't go with a free ISP, then you'll pay a set amount per month to be online.

Phone support charges
Technical support is great – as long as you're not having to pay a fortune to benefit from it. Find out how much free service providers charge per minute for calls to their technical support desks.

Telephone support hours
The hours when the technical support desk will be open to take your calls.

Our ISP testing is carried out by NetBasics, an independent company specialising in providing ISP information for consumers and businesses. NetBasics makes every effort to ensure that the data presented to you is correct. The publishers of *the Net* and NetBasics cannot be held liable for any damages caused by the publication of this data. Any Internet service provider that wishes to be included in the evaluation programme should contact eval@netbasics.com **For more information on NetBasics, visit its Web site at *www.netbasics.com*.**

PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESS	CONTENT	MAC SUPPORT	WEB SPACE	SET-UP FEE	MONTHLY CHARGE	PHONE SUPPORT CHARGES	PHONE SUPPORT HOURS
01473 211922	1	None	Yes	5Mb	0	11.75	Mobile	9-5 M-F, 8-9 S-S
0800 3765432	5	Massive amount of content	Yes	10Mb	0	16.95	Free	8-10.30M-F 9-9.30S-S
0700 2842867	1	'Flightalogue' lists a host of goodies	No	15Mb	0	11.75	Standard	9-9 7 days
0870 6006006	5	Entertainment, sport, shopping, finance etc	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0800 800001	Unlimited	From Excite	Yes	0	0	0	50p per minute	8-12 Midnight
0800 800001	5	None	Yes	10Mb	0	11.75	Local	24/7
0845 3063636	5	Online dating, Bunshopping, *The Sun* online etc	Yes	25Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0800 0923 001	5	Channels and account administration	No	20 Mb	0	0	National	24/7
0171 3358300	5	Chat servers, channels, services, Web news	Yes	20Mb	0	0	Free	24/7
0845 3555050	Unlimited	None	Yes	30Mb	0	17.61	Local call	9-10 M-F, 12-6 S-S
0800 3582828	Unlimited	None	Yes	25Mb	0	8.99	Free	24/7
0990 000200	5	A large range of channels and a search engine	No	10Mb	0	16.95	National	8-12 Midnight
Sign up online	Unlimited	Channel-based content provided by Virgin	No	Unlimited	0	0	Unavailable	24/7
01543 454840	1	None	Yes	0.1Mb	0	11.74	Standard	8.30-6 M-F
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	Unlimited	0	0	Metered	24/7
0800 0720000	Unlimited	User zone containing handy member services	Yes	20Mb	0	13.50	Local	9-9 7days
0171 6814444	Unlimited	None	Yes	2Mb	0	11.99	Free	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	Free access to the Mplayer games network	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
01624 677666	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	11.75	Local	9-10 M-F 10-4 S-S
0800 0737800	Unlimited	None	Yes	15Mb	0	0	National	7-11, 7 Days
0113 294 4224	Unlimited	Search engines and support	Yes	10Mb	0	12.50	Local	Business hours
Sign up online	1	Newsgroups and IE5 download	No	10Mb	0	0	Metered	24/7
01329 511611	Unlimited	Games links and independent status	Yes	20Mb	0	0	National rates	9-6 7 days
0870 7060504	5	None	Yes	Unlimited	0	0	Premium rate	24/7
0990 500049	Unlimited	Extensive channel-based content	Yes	15Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	Search engine page and technical support	No	10Mb	0	0	Available soon	n/a
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	50Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0870 7441111	Unlimited	On-site search engine access	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
At Gateway Stores	Unlimited	None	No	10Mb	0	0	Free	24/7

INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDERS

ISP NAME	WEB ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF SERVICE
Go Free **FREE**	***www.gofree.co.uk***	Free ISP offering online sign-up, complete with helpline	Unlimited
IC24 **FREE**	***www.ic24.net***	The free ISP service of Mirror Group Newspapers	Unlimited
LineOne **FREE**	***www.lineone.net***	BT's Internet service has recently dropped its subscription charge	Unlimited
London Web Comm Ltd	***www.londonweb.net***	An emphasis on corporate clientele. Useful London Local Directory	Unlimited
Netcom	***www.netcom.net.uk***	A comprehensive range of services to the home and business user	Unlimited
Net Communications Ltd	***www.netcom.co.uk***	Norwich-based ISP offering a comprehensive range of services	Unlimited
Nildram **FREE**	***www.nildram.net***	A host of features including game and news servers	Unlimited
OrbitalNet **FREE**	***www.orbitalnet.co.uk***	Dial-up, Web hosting and design for home and business users. Free for home users	Unlimited
Paradise Internet Network Service	***www.pins.co.uk***	Paradise Internet is a subscription provider which also authors software	Unlimited
Powergen Surf & Save **FREE**	***www.pgen.net***	Powergen's own ISP earns you points off your electricity bill	Unlimited
Screaming.net **FREE**	***www.screaming.net***	The pioneer of the free access/free phone call model	Unlimited
Sniff Out **FREE**	***www.sniffout.net***	Free ISP with online sign-up help and comprehensive features	Unlimited
Sonnet Internet Ltd	***www.sonnet.co.uk***	Packages and solutions for the private and business user	Unlimited
This is it! **FREE**	***www.thisisit.co.uk***	End-user targeted free ISP	Unlimited
UK Fantastic **FREE**	***www.ukfantastic.net***	Spirited free ISP offering good online technical help	Unlimited
UK Online Ltd **FREE**	***www.ukonline.co.uk***	A family-friendly free ISP with plenty of shareware and gaming software. Sign up online	Unlimited
UUNet	***www.uk.uu.net***	Long-established ISP. Residential and small business facilities available	Unlimited
Virgin Net **FREE**	***www.virgin.net***	The long-standing ISP now offering a stylish free Internet access service	Unlimited
Which? Online	***www.which.net***	A free ISP from the eponymous consumer affairs magazine	Unlimited
Wireplay Internet **FREE**	***www.wireplay.com***	Wireplay is an online games network offering access to Intranet-based fast games servers	Unlimited
X-Stream Network **FREE**	***www.x-stream.com***	Offers enhanced member services, such as occasional free phone calls to the Net	Unlimited

Network performance

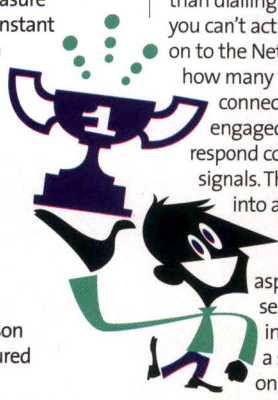
August 2000

Independent testing carried out by NetBasics – contact eval@netbasics.com

We test the best ISPs in the country for the reliability and speed of their connection. The tests are conducted in three areas and a star rating is given indicative of their performance. The three areas of testing are:

VARIATION IN MODEM SPEED

This is a gauge to measure whether you get a constant speed once a modem connects to an ISP. ISPs should offer a constant speed and we measure any variation. Each ISP starts with 100 percent and loses position the greater the variance in connection. This is achieved by comparison so that no ISP is favoured above others.



VARIATION IN TIME TO CONNECT

This section of the test measures the variation in how long it takes to get connected to your ISP. The reading is taken from the stage between clicking 'Connect' and then physically connecting.

AVAILABILITY

There's nothing more frustrating than dialling your ISP and finding you can't actually get through and on to the Net. This area measures how many times an ISP refuses to connect, either through the engaged tone, or if it does not respond correctly to modem signals. The results are combined into a single reading giving us a fair way to chart ISPs based on relevant aspects of their dial-in service. The results shown in the chart are based on a sample of 50 ISPs from ongoing tests.

FIRSTNET Services Limited

1	Firstnet	★★★★★	26	F9 Free	★★★★
2	Netcom	★★★★★	27	Freenet	★★★★
3	Net Commun.	★★★★★	28	Freeserve	★★★★
4	UUNet	★★★★★	29	Free to You	★★★★
5	AngliaNet	★★★★★	30	Dabsol	★★★★
6	Cyberphile	★★★★★	31	Bun	★★★★
7	Wireplay	★★★★★	32	Easynet	★★★★
8	Nildram	★★★★★	33	Eidosnet	★★★
9	Enterprise	★★★★★	34	Go Free	★★★
10	BT Internet	★★★★★	35	Compuserve	★★★
11	LineOne	★★★★★	36	Breathe	★★★
12	Aviators Network	★★★★★	37	AOL	★★★
13	Powergen	★★★★★	38	Virgin Net	★★★
14	Direct Connection	★★★★★	39	UK Online	★★★
15	Callnet	★★★★★	40	Claranet	★★★
16	London Web	★★★★★	41	X-Stream Network	★★★
17	Gateway 2000	★★★★★	42	Screaming.net	★★★
18	Sonnet Internet	★★★★★	43	Which? Online	★★
19	Freewire	★★★★★	44	Orbitalnet	★★
20	Free Internet	★★★★★	45	CIX	★★
21	Paradise Internet	★★★★★	46	Cable and Wireless	★★
22	This is it!	★★★★★	47	IC24	★★
23	BT Click	★★★★	48	Freezone	★★
24	Free Online	★★★★	49	Connect Free	★★
25	Sniff Out	★★★★	50	UK Fantastic	★★

what service provider?

PHONE NUMBER	EMAIL ADDRESSES	CONTENT	MAC SUPPORT	WEB SPACE	SET-UP FEE	MONTHLY CHARGE	PHONE SUPPORT CHARGES	PHONE SUPPORT HOURS
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	No	20Mb	0	0	Metered	24/7
0870 9090262	Unlimited	Channel based content with news, sport, weather	No	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0800 111210	5	News, shopping, sport, community etc	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	8-Midnight M-Sa
0181 3494500	3	None	Yes	5Mb	17.63	14.68	Standard	9-9 M-Sa
0870 5668008	20	A business oriented portal site	Yes	25Mb	0	14.95	National	24/7
01603 444444	1	None	No	20Mb	25.00	10.00	National	Business hours
01297 319103	Unlimited	None	No	25Mb	0	0	National	9-9 M-S
01233 646505	5	None	Yes	5Mb	0	0	Local	Business hours
01256 414863	1	None	Yes	2Mb	17.63	9.40	National	11-7 M-F
0870 6060653	5	Links to news, business and entertainment sites	No	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
Sign up at Tempo	Unlimited	Travel, entertainment, business, sport etc	No	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
01884 742510	Unlimited	Channel based layout with news, sport etc	Yes	20Mb	0	0	National	8-8 M-S
0171 8912000	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	12.50	National	9-9 M-S
0906 9124000	Unlimited	None	No	20Mb	0	0	£1 per minute	24/7
Sign up online	Unlimited	None	Yes	5Mb	0	0	£1 per minute	24/7
01749 333333	1	None	Yes	Unlimited	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0871 6004454	5	UUNet news, products and services	No	60Mb	Call	Call	Email and online	Email and online
0500 558800	5	Several Virgin channels	Yes	10Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7
0645 830240	1	Online shopping and consumer affairs content	Yes	2Mb	11.75	14.75	Free	24/7
0845 757 7577	0	Games news, games chat, games add-ons	No	0	0	0	50p per minute	12pm-12 am, 7 days
0870 7306466	1	Chat, news, lifestyle, shopping, etc	No	20Mb	0	0	50p per minute	24/7

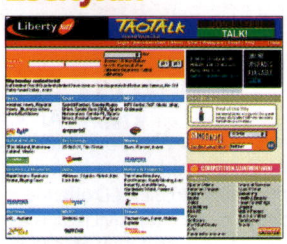
ISP NEWS IN BRIEF
All the service provider news you need

Altavista – at last

Details were finally beginning to emerge about Altavista's long-awaited unmetered service as we went to press. Due to launch on 30 June, the initial sign-up fee for the service is expected to be £59. There will reportedly be no monthly fees, no need to change telephone provider and no minimum spend on voice calls. Sign-up will initially be limited to just 90,000 users a month, so that the company will be able to monitor the service and the usage of it.

www.altavista.co.uk

Taking away your Libertysurf



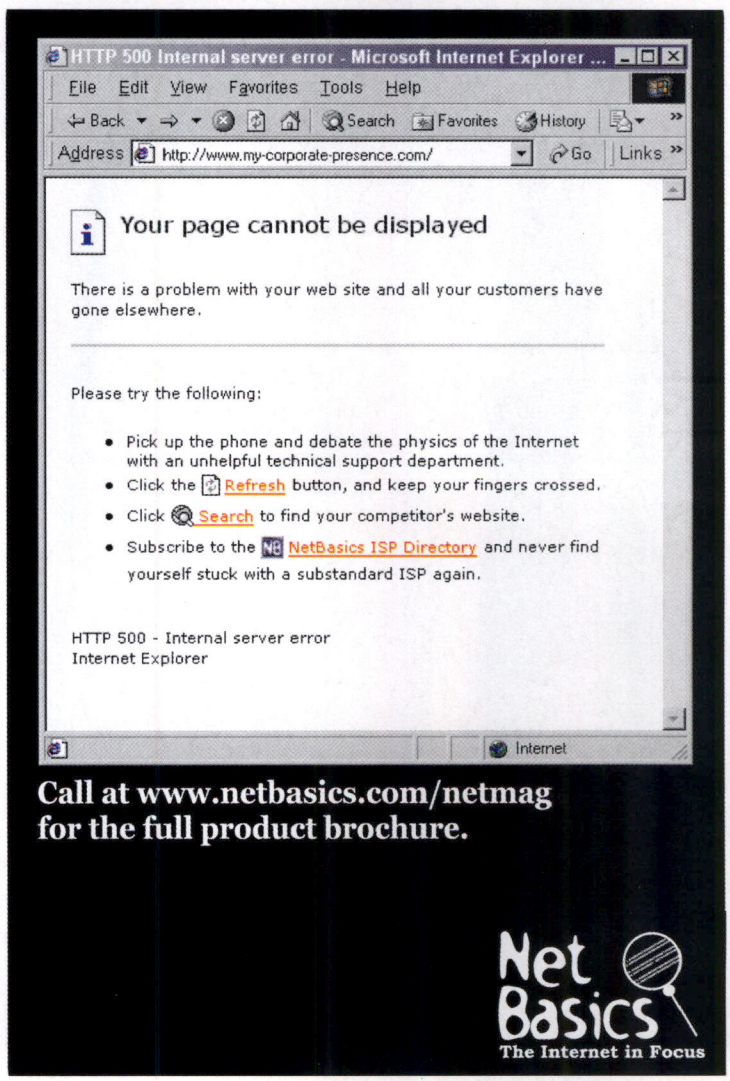
LibertySurf has become the latest victim of massive demand for unmetered access. The ISP has suspended sales of its CDs offering users off-peak surfing for just £20 a year, after high demand caused network and helpline congestion. The service had been running since May. It is not known when the CDs will be sold again, but LibertySurf is doubling the number of staff on the lines.

www.libertysurf.co.uk

Care for one pence?

Charity ISP Care4Free has announced a 1p per minute tariff, beginning at the start of July. The ISP, which is dedicated to supporting charities, is offering the service with no registration fee, no monthly charge, no need to change your telephone provider and a flat rate of 1 pence per minute at all times.

Of Care4Free's profits, 75 percent goes to charity. The service also provides charities with their own Web pages. ***www.care4free.net***



Call at www.netbasics.com/netmag for the full product brochure.

Net Basics
The Internet in Focus

THE FLAT PACK

Eight of the best flat-panel monitors for your PC – if you're feeling flush...

There's absolutely no debate: LCD flat-panel displays are the greatest-looking devices you can attach to a computer. But the price of cool never comes cheap: you'll be lucky to get one for less than a painful £650 – before VAT. The good news is that prices are slowly beginning to drop, although they still have a long way to go until they match those of traditional displays, because of enormous demand for LCDs in notebooks, camcorders and other AV kit. And before you start scouring the Web looking for cheap models, the sad truth is that prices are pretty much the same the world over. They might be a little cheaper in the US, but shipping charges will wipe out any gain – although if you're lucky you might pick up a bargain in Hong Kong.

But maybe you've won the Lottery – should you go out and buy one of these space-age displays? Visually they offer plenty of advantages over conventional cathode ray tube (CRT) displays, and undoubtedly add an extra dimension to surfing the Web. The image they produce is very sharp, as each pixel is driven by its own transistor, there are no focus errors and they don't flicker. Their visible area is generous, too: unlike a CRT, where a 17in tube actually delivers a visible diagonal of 16in or less, a 15in LCD delivers just that. All this at a fraction of the desktop footprint, far less power consumption and far less waste heat to deal with.

HANSOL 500F

£699 + VAT ★★★★

Hansol isn't one of the big-name monitor makers – but who cares, when its products are good and cheap? This entry-level display costs about £100 less than many of its rivals, although you won't find luxuries like built-in loudspeakers or USB ports. Otherwise, it's a conventional 15in 1024x768 display delivering very acceptable quality. The image appeared very bright but there seemed to be no way to turn it down a notch – using the on-screen menus appeared to have little effect. Normally, when you plug in an LCD display to your PC, it has to be 'tuned' in to your VGA card or the image can look somewhat sparkly; this is done automatically by the 500F, so set-up took just a matter of seconds.

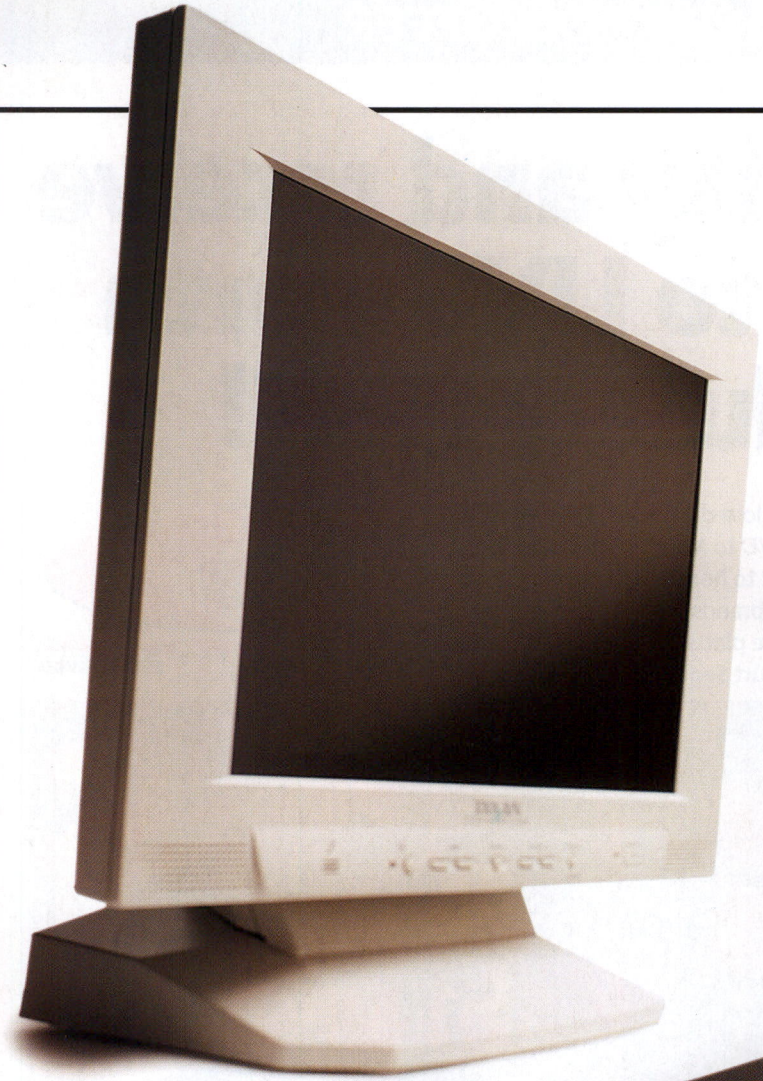
HITACHI CML150X

£799 + VAT ★★★

Hitachi is one of the big hitters in the monitor market, best known for its high-quality CRTs. Its LCD offering is no slouch either – the CML150X is a 15in model with a resolution of 1024x768, par for the LCD course. Set-up was a piece of cake, and image quality was crisp and even. You also get a wide 160 degree viewing angle plus an excellent 200:1 contrast ratio. The bulky base contains the power supply, giving it a large desktop footprint, but as some displays use a clunky external transformer 'brick', this is a neater solution. On the downside, there are no USB ports.

SILICON GRAPHICS 1600SW £1790 + VAT ★★★

Most of the special effects you've seen in recent Hollywood blockbusters were produced on Silicon Graphics kit. This would account for the 1600SW's odd aspect ratio, akin to cinema's 'letterbox' format, meaning you could comfortably display two 800x1024 Web browsers side by side on screen. It's controlled through software and is a digital display, so comes bundled with a Number 9 Revolution IV graphics card. This makes it sharp at any resolution and 'fast', too, and is easily the best LCD for viewing animations, videos and games. Sadly, despite its high price, you don't get goodies such as USB ports or speakers. But it looks good.



LCD VS CRT

Has the cathode ray tube had its day?

The vast majority of desktop PCs ship with CRT monitors. There's life in the old dog yet: the latest generation of truly flat-screen CRT displays are compact, and continue to drop in price. CRTs also work well at multiple resolutions – an important consideration for gamers. LCDs have a single optimum resolution: to use a lower resolution, either a smaller portion of the panel is used for the display, or pixels have to be scaled up to fill the screen, often resulting in a 'blocky' look. And many graphics professionals prefer to have control over colour settings – absent on an LCD display.

But LCD displays have their virtues: compare a 15-inch deep, 30-pound CRT against a panel that's less than seven inches deep and weighs 12 or 13 pounds, and it's easy to see the advantages. They don't have a CRT's geometric or focus problems, and their clarity makes it easier to view higher resolutions at smaller screen sizes.

And the latest LCDs are all digital. A screen image starts life in the PC as a digital signal, is converted to analogue on the VGA card and passed to the LCD display, where it's converted back to digital – sometimes resulting in a degraded image. This doesn't happen with notebooks, which are wholly digital. Desktop PCs' graphics cards are now also starting to feature digital ports.

TAXAN CRYSTALVISION 675

£789 + VAT ★★★★

The CrystalVision is a competent, well-specified 15in display with 1024x768 resolution, all for a reasonable price. Its features include a comprehensive on-screen menu with plenty of options, including a backlight fader, which is important for prolonging the life of the display. It has four USB ports plus a pair of tinny-sounding speakers and an integral mic, as well as volume controls and a useful mute button. It also delivers a beautifully clear, bright display with no hint of any stuck pixels.

SONY SDM-N50

PRICE £1100 + VAT ★★★★★

The truly beautiful Sony SDM-N50 is the best-looking 1024x768 display money can buy. There are just a few buttons on the bezel and the screen itself is painfully thin – no more than half an inch thick. The domed base contains a pair of micro speakers featuring a two-stage stereo expander and bass boost. There's also a headphone socket. The screen looks anorexic because most of the gubbins live in a separate gizmo, the pretentiously named 'Media Box', with power socket, VGA inputs and an audio jack – but no USB. The dual video inputs make the Sony an even handier space-saver, letting you share the screen between two PCs or Macs. The picture quality, need we say, is superb.

SPECIAL SUBSCRIPTION OFFER

Subscribe today and receive two tickets to LIVE worth £24 absolutely FREE!

SAVE 10%

Get the low-down on all the latest kit, from DVD to MP3, WAP to minidisc, Internet to home entertainment. All the top brands, all the latest products, all in one place. Try them at LIVE 2000, Earls Court Sept 21st–24th 2000.

LIVE 2000 EVENT

AUDIO · DVD · DIGITAL · GAMES · INTERNET · MOBILES

EARLS COURT, LONDON 21-24 SEPTEMBER

This is a Direct Debit offer only and open to UK subscribers only. Overseas rates are available on request by calling +44 (0) 1795 414 807. Details of the Direct Debit guarantee are available on request. All applications must be received by 9th August 2000. Responsibility cannot be accepted for applications lost, delayed or damaged in transit. Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of application. Please allow 21 days for receipt of your tickets and 28 days for receipt of your first issue. Final date for dispatching tickets will be 11th September 2000. LIVE at Earls Court, London, runs from 21st to 24th September 2000. Opening hours are from Thursday 12pm – 8pm, Friday 10am – 8pm and the weekend 9am – 6pm. Please contact the customer service team on 01795 414 807 if you have not received your tickets by 15th September 2000. Tickets are subject to availability, while stocks last. If stock runs out or late applications will automatically be set up as three free issues and then £6.75 every quarter.

thenet subscription order form

ORDER DETAILS

Please specify which day you would prefer to attend Live 2000

Thurs 21 Sept ❑ Fri 22nd Sept ❑ Sat 23rd Sept ❑ Sun 24th Sept ❑

❑ Please start my subscription to **thenet** at £6.75 every quarter

❑ Please transfer my existing subscription to **thenet** to £6.75 quarterly Direct Debits at the end of my current term.

YOUR DETAILS MUST BE COMPLETED – BLOCK CAPITALS

Mr/Mrs/Ms _____ Initial _____ Surname _____

Address _____

_____

_____ Postcode _____

Telephone _____

We may use your contact details to inform you about other offers and reputable companies, whose products and services may be of interest to you. Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive such offers ❑

DIRECT DEBIT PAYMENT – £6.75 every quarter SAVE 10%

To the Manager, Bank Name _____

Address _____

_____ Postcode _____

Name of account holder(s) _____

Bank Sort Code (from top right corner of cheque) | | | | | | |

Bank or Building Society Account Number | | | | | | | |

Reference Number (for office use only) _____

DIRECT Debit

Originators ID No 850699

Please pay **Haymarket Magazines Limited** Direct Debits from the account detailed on this instruction subject to the safeguards assured by the Direct Debit guarantee. I understand that this instruction may remain with Haymarket Magazines Ltd and, if so, details will be passed electronically to my Bank/Building Society.

Signature _____ Date _____

Please send this form (photocopies acceptable) to: **the net, FREEPOST SEA7684, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8BR**

MO8ODP

NEC MULTISYNC LCD1525S £1473 + VAT ★★★★

NEC is a top-tier monitor-maker with a reputation to match. Other 15in flat-panel displays offer 1024x768 resolution, but the LCD1525S manages to pack 1280x1024 into the same space – roughly equivalent to an 18in CRT. This was the least bulky of our 15in displays, with the image framed by the thinnest of bezels, making it easy to tilt and swivel. The menu system was slightly less intuitive to use, but it was very easy to kick the auto-adjust into action. Like some other displays, the LCD1525S is designed to be shared, so has two VGA inputs. Other goodies include four USB ports. Overall, a great display with a steep price tag. We want one.

COMPAQ TFT5000 £932 + VAT ★★★★

Not a company best known for its monitors, Compaq's second-generation LCD display nevertheless delivers good image quality and the ability to pivot between landscape and portrait modes. It's costly for a 15in display, but you get what you pay for – a nice bright image and plenty of utility software. The on-screen menus are straightforward, and once auto-adjusted the picture quality was top-notch, with great contrast and a very wide viewing angle. The TFT5000's pivot action was nice and smooth and the stand is optional – you can actually hang this screen on the wall – while the heavy-duty base lets you adjust the height of the monitor, as well as pivot it.

IIYAMA PROLITE 38G £889 + VAT ★★★

There are cheaper versions of the '38' range available, so you're paying for extra features here: four USB ports, built-in speakers and a headphone socket – although unsurprisingly the speakers sound weedier than the average front path. Like the Compaq this is a pivoting display: simply tilt it back and rotate, then click on a desktop icon to spin the screen image through 90 degrees. Remember that LCD viewing angles are always optimised horizontally, so when pivoted you get a much narrower angle in portrait than landscape. Overall, image quality wasn't bad, but there are better displays in our round-up.

WORDS: ROGER GANN; PICTURES: NICK WRIGHT

Let's get down to business

Fancy starting up your own e-business? We've searched out stacks of sites and tools to help get it off the ground

WHEN BOO.COM WENT BELLY UP earlier this summer, a lot of the newspaper coverage focused on the fact that the company's founders had burnt their way through almost £100m worth of venture capital in less than two years. How daft can you get? They should have pocketed the £100m then built their site using some of the free tools and services that are floating around on the Web.

There are lots of people who come up with ideas for small businesses that they can run on the Web. Many of these budding e-trepreneurs are put off, though, because they lack the technical know-how to get a business Web site up and running, or they think that it will cost too much.

They burnt their way through £100m of capital in two years

But it's not as hard as you might think. The Internet is an ideal breeding ground for small businesses. It's cheap and easy to use, provides you with access to millions of potential customers, and you can work from home – so you don't need offices.

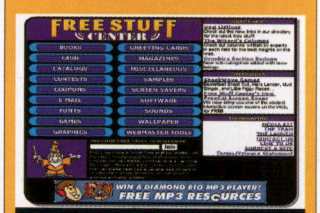
The start-up costs needn't be that high, either. You'll need Internet access of course, but with services such as BT's SurfTime (***www.bt.com/surftime***) becoming available you can have 24-hour, seven-days-a-week access for under £50 a month.

You don't need to spend a fortune on software or a professional Web design team, either. There's a vast amount of freebie design tools out there on the Internet. A lot of it is general purpose stuff – clip art and suchlike aimed at people who just want to smarten up their home pages. However, there are also plenty of tools that are specifically designed with e-businesses in mind.

BUSINESS ADVICE AND PROMOTIONAL IDEAS

- ***www.freestuffcenter.com***
- ***www.virtualpromote.com***
- ***www.zdnet.com***
- ***www.allbusiness.com***
- ***www.jimtools.com***

Hints at allbusiness.com



It's free at freestuffcenter.com

Even more importantly, much of this material is aimed at businesses that don't have armies of programmers on tap, so you don't need to be a mega-geek in order to use them.

Yes, there's a lot of technical work involved in setting up something like a security system that will allow people to safely send their credit-card details – but you don't have to go that far to get your business working on the Net. Thousands of companies have excellent Web sites, but never go as far as asking people to submit credit-card orders. Many businesses simply use the Web as a way of promoting their products or services, providing information to potential customers. Then, if people want to buy your products, they can get in touch by phone, email, or by filling out a form on your Web site.

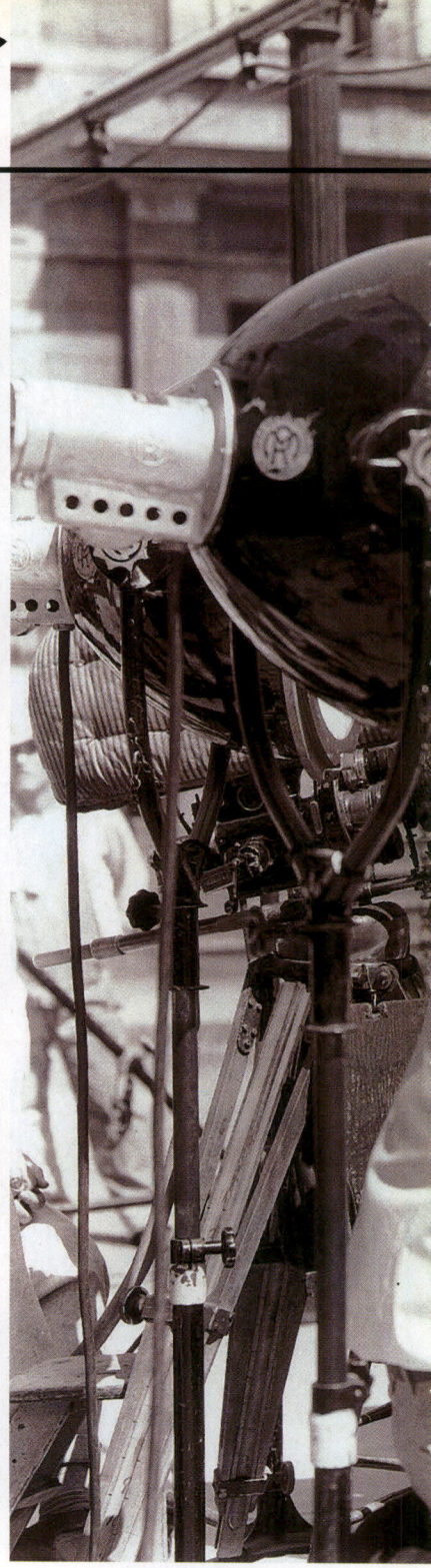
GETTING STARTED

Your first step, of course, is to get hold of a Web design program that you can use to create your site. There are plenty of free design programs, but this is one occasion when you might want to consider investing in a proper commercial package.

Microsoft's FrontPage 2000 is a good choice for the beginner, as it includes powerful 'Wizards' that can create an entire Web site in minutes. The Wizard will ask what sort of site you want and what product information to include. It then creates linked pages for you. All you have to do is fill in the gaps with your own text and pictures.

Adobe's PageMill is another easy program to get started with. It doesn't include wizards, but the accompanying CD-ROM has a series of ready-made sites that you can adapt to your own needs. It also includes artwork that you can use to create buttons and imagemaps, as well as a handy e-business program called SiteExpress that allows people to create a 'shopping cart' so they can select products they're interested in while browsing your site.

If you're really determined to do things on the cheap you can download a free Web editor such as CuteHTML, and knock up your pages for nothing. If you're not confident designing pages you can go to a site such as freewebtemplates.com and download free Web templates.



Early Gameboy trials were promising

This is a quick and easy way to produce professional-looking page designs, but as well as providing cheap eye-candy, templates can also solve specific problems that a lot of novice Webmasters have trouble with. Tables, for instance, are handy for displaying price lists, but it can often be a real hassle to get the table layout just right. Templates on freewebtemplates.com include ready-made tables that allow you to just drop the information straight in, and there are pre-packed tools that can save you tedious editing work.

Rollover buttons are a good way of adding a professional gloss to your Web site. Rollovers work by changing appearance when you pass the mouse over them, perhaps highlighting text that explains what the button does or which page it leads to. Creating rollovers is an awkward business, though: you have to generate multiple graphics for each button, then use Javascript to link the graphics so the button switches from one graphic to another as the mouse passes over it.

If you don't mind doing some of the graphics work yourself you can download the free demo version of Adobe's new LiveMotion program, which is packed with graphics tools. If you want help with the graphics simply pop along to a site such as mediabuilder.com or the Animation Factory at ***animafactory.com***. These sites have libraries of animations and other types of graphics, as well as ready-made bits of Javascript that do the programming work for you.

Mediabuilder.com also has neat online tools that you can use directly within your own browser to create very slick graphics for your Web site.

Another good place for doing clever things with buttons is ***button tool.com***, home of the Cool Button Tool. This is a little application – or 'applet' – written in the Java programming language that lets you do things with animated buttons and sound effects.

PROGRAMMING STUFF

All these tools concentrate on the visual appearance of your Web site, but once you get into e-business

FREE WEB HOSTING AND DESIGN SERVICES

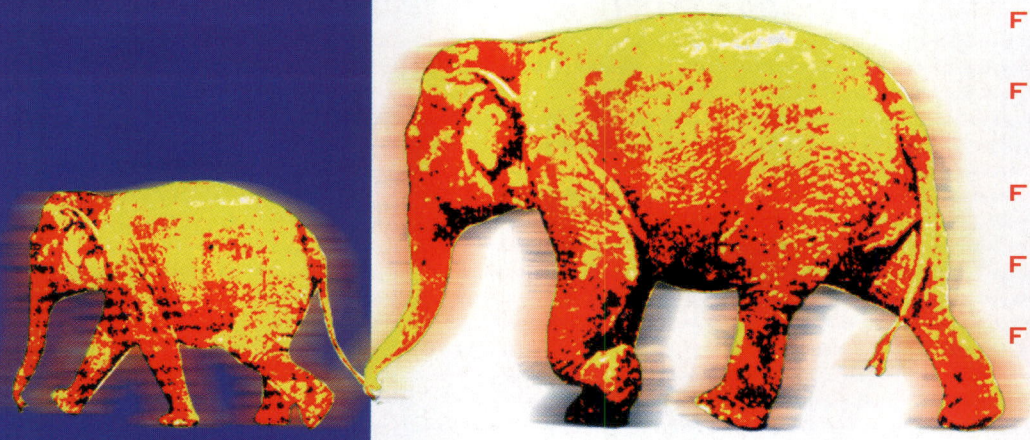
- ***www.angelfire.com***
- ***www.homestead.com***
- ***www.bigstep.com***
- ***www.xoom.com***
- ***www.zy.com***

FREE

£5.00 p.a. / $8.00p.a.
inc. InterNIC / Registrar fees

Domain name registration

100MB Webspace with
hosting service package *plus...*



FREE
Microsoft Frontpage Extensions

FREE
Web Email Account

FREE
POP3 Email Account - Unlimited Alias

FREE
Mail Forwarding

FREE
Account Setup

FREE
Bandwidth - 155Mbs Connection

NEW Real Audio Server

order online
www.easyspace.com

Don't forget,
apply now and take advantage of this BIG offer

CD WOW!
www.cd-wow.co.uk

TOP 75 CHART CDs

The Hottest New Releases &

Great Selection Of Artist Albums

ONLY £8.99 INC. FREE Delivery

www.cd-wow.co.uk

you'll need to think about the out-of-sight 'backroom' stuff as well. Filling in forms, monitoring traffic, handling databases – these are all tasks that the business Webmaster needs to tackle at some point.

Many of these tasks are handled by yet another programming language called CGI – common gateway interface. There are a lot of Web sites aimed at budding Webmasters that provide ready-made CGI scripts you can just drop into your pages without having to understand how the programming side of things works.

One of the best is ***www.freecode.com***, a site that is crammed with tools such as hit-counters, forms and menus for the budding Webmeister. Other useful sites for this sort of stuff are JimTools and WebMasterTools, and there's a '*Webmaster portal*' called 123webmaster that is aimed at the small-business Webmaster.

A lot of this stuff can be quite complicated, even though all the programming work's already been done for you. If you think you need a bit of help getting to grips with these tools there are some good tutorials and 'getting started' guides for small businesses on ZDNet.

You need a decent idea for a product that people actually want

THE PERFECT HOST

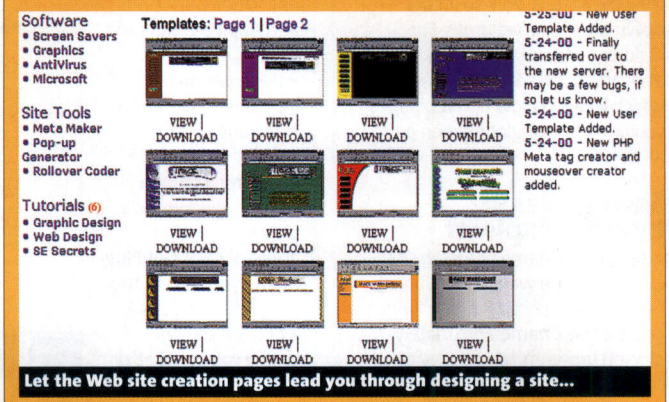
Most ISPs provide their subscribers with a certain amount of free space on their Web servers that can be used to host your Web pages. However, these free hosting services are intended for personal use, rather than for running a commercial business, and you may find that your ISP has restrictions on the type of business you can conduct on your personal home pages. You can always upgrade to a proper business account with your ISP, but this can cost quite a bit more than an ordinary home-user account.

If you don't want to pay extra for this type of hosting service you'll find that there are plenty of sites on the Internet that are happy to host your pages free of charge. There are well-known organisations such as Tripod and Geocities that base their entire business on acting as hosts to 'communities' of Internet users. These outfits won't stop you from running a small business from a Web site that they host for you, but their focus tends to be on community-minded stuff like chat-rooms and discussion forums.

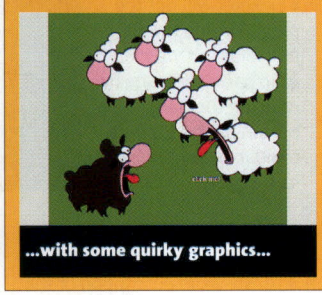
START ME UP!

Here are some useful tools and sources of information for anyone who wants to start up their own Web business

- LiveMotion graphics program ***www.adobe.com***
- CuteHTML layout program ***www.cutehtml.com***
- Free templates ***wwwfreewebtemplates.com***
- Davecentral archives ***www.davecentral.com***
- Animation Factory ***www.animafactory.com***
- Cool Button Tool ***www.buttontool.com***
- Free graphics tools ***www.mediabuilder.com***
- Scripting tools ***www.freecode.com***
- Webmaster portal ***www.123webmaster.com***
- Webmaster tools ***www.freestuffcenter.com***



Let the Web site creation pages lead you through designing a site...


...with some quirky graphics...

...or pieces of short animation

However, there are a number of similar Web-hosting services that put more of an emphasis on the small/home business user. Angelfire, Homestead and BigStep are all good places to set up your business site, and as well as hosting your pages they also provide design tools and templates that will help you create your first pages in minutes. They also offer promotional ideas, and information on 'affiliate programs' – in which you get paid for carrying ads or providing links to other sites.

These business-oriented services can also help out with e-commerce systems, such as creating shopping carts and credit-card ordering systems, that are often too complex or expensive for a small start-up outfit to tackle by themselves.

They'll let anyone into the Church bring-and-buy sale these days

DRUMMING UP BUSINESS

So your Web pages look great. You've got all the programming stuff purring away smoothly in the background, and you've found a nice free host to provide a home for your site. Now all you have to do is get people to actually come and take a look. That's no easy task, though, as there are millions of other Web sites competing with you for the world's disposable income.

Obviously you need to register with the main search engines, but even then you'll still be just one name on a long list that gets spat out of a search engine. There are other things you can do to draw attention to your site, such as using 'meta tags' – invisible HTML code tucked away at the top of your pages that give search engines extra information about your site. These can help bump you up the list so that you elbow your rivals out of the way – see ***www.searchenginewatch.com*** for more information.

Then there are WebRings – groups of sites that concentrate on a specific subject. Sites in a Web ring cooperate by carrying links to others in the same ring – check out ***www.webring.org*** or email a ring that you come across direct. Or you can get involved in banner exchanges, where sites agree to carry banner ads for each other as a kind of co-promotional tool.

To get advice on promotional activities such as these you can visit sites such as Virtual Promote and FreeStuffCentre, where experienced Web masters exchange tips on how to generate traffic for your Web site.

But, remember: the people at Boo.com seemed to have it all. A quirky brand name, stacks of dosh from investors, a trendy Web site... and they still went bust. As one newspaper pointed out, they basically tried to sell a load of stuff on the Internet people didn't even want to buy from their high street shops. So what you need more than Java and rollovers and clever CGI scripts is a decent idea for a product or service that people actually want. Get that bit right and the megabucks will take care of themselves.

PICTURES: PA, KOBAL COLLECTION

Web browsers

Allow *the net* to take you by the hand, and carefully guide you through the big, wide and confusing world of Internet browsers

What do I use to explore the Web?

The software you use to look at pages on the Web is called a 'browser'. The most popular are Microsoft Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator. If you have a PC running Windows 95 or 98, you will almost certainly have Internet Explorer already installed. However, Navigator and other browsers such as Opera run in much the same way.

What are my options?

Statistically, Internet Explorer is the most popular browser on the planet. Together with its nearest competitor, Netscape Navigator, it accounts for 97 percent of all Web page hits.

With the facilities that the two offer, it's hardly surprising that they rule the roost. Internet Explorer 5.0 is the current leader of the Internet pack. It's packed – jam-packed, in fact – with features.

Netscape Navigator 4.08 represents the only serious competition to Internet Explorer. But it still can't reach the dizzying heights of IE – in fact it's slipped so much in popularity that Web site designers now often make sure their pages look right in IE alone.

You would've thought that with the market pretty much sewn up between the big two, no-one would be foolhardy enough to attempt to write a rival browser – but there are others. Opera, for example, is a tiny little thing at 1.5Mb (compared with Netscape Communicator's 10Mb+). It's fast, but it's let down by an ugly appearance. The Opera equivalent for Macs is iCab. It has many of the excellent features of Opera, but it looks and works even better.

If you want a real rebel browser, try Lynx. It's text only, so it cuts down on download times. For children (or adults who are kids at heart), there's Surf Monkey, which lets you blow up Web pages you don't like, or gloop green paint all over them.

Saving sites in Internet Explorer

Typing in the name of a Web site every time you want to visit it can be a pain – especially if it's a long and complex name. Fortunately, all Web browsers have a way of saving the locations of sites you like, so you can revisit them without needing to retype them. In Internet Explorer these saved site addresses are called Favourites, while Netscape Navigator calls them Bookmarks.

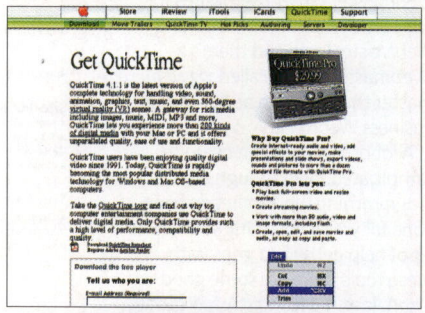
1 From the Favourites menu, choose 'Add to Favourite.' The keyboard shortcut for the move is Control D.

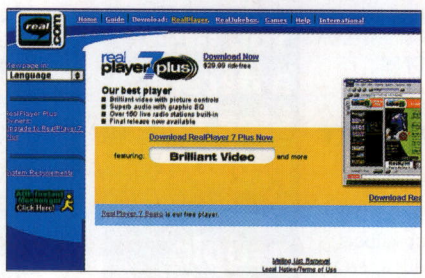
2 When asked whether you want to subscribe to the site, choose the 'No, just add this page to my Favourites' option. You'll see the title of the page in the 'Name' section of the site; if this is not descriptive enough for you, type a five- or six-word description of the site. Then hit OK.

3 You will now find that the site has been added to your Favourites menu. To visit the site, just click 'Favourites' and then go to the menu list and select it.

Supercharge your browser

Your basic Internet Explorer set-up comes with several 'plug-ins'. These are additional pieces of software which enable your browser to play, for example, multimedia effects. If you arrive at a site requiring a plug-in that you don't have, you'll be prompted to download and install it. The plug-ins you'll need to get the most from your browsing include: RealPlayer at ***www.real.com*** (bottom), which lets you watch videos or listen to music; Shockwave at ***www.shockwave.com*** for animation and sound; and Apple's QuickTime (below) at ***www.apple.com/quicktime/***, which plays video and sound.





Installing a plug-in

1 When you require a plug-in, a prompt appears. Click 'Get Plug-in' and you'll go to the plug-in's home page.

2 Click on the link where you can 'Get' or 'Download' the plug-in.

3 Explorer will put the plug-in inside the correct folder on your PC.

4 Go back to the site by pressing the Back button on the Explorer toolbar and enjoy it in its full glory.

Browser alternatives

Proof that there's more to browsing than Explorer or Netscape

MAC BROWSERS

BROWSER	RATING	FOR	AGAINST	DOWNLOAD FROM
ICAB	★★★★	Fast. Gets rid of irritating ad banners	Could support more features	www.icab.de
HOTJAVA	★★	Pretty showcase for Java technology	Slow; somewhat unstable	java.sun.com/products/hotjava/3.0/
INTERNET EXPLORER	★★★★	State-of-the-art browsing on the Mac	Can be memory-hungry	www.microsoft.com/Mac/IE/
LYNX	★★★★	Blazingly fast at fact-finding	If it isn't text, Lynx isn't interested	www.lirmm.fr/~gutkneco/maclynx/
NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR	★★★	It's almost as good as IE...	Doesn't display pages as prettily as IE	www.netscape.com

PC BROWSERS

AMAYA	★★	Great for those into Net standards...	...not for those who aren't	www.w3.org/Amaya/User/BinDist.html
ARACHNE	★★	It runs in DOS and is written by Czechs	A pain to set up	arachne.cz
CUSTOM BROWSER	★	Adds minimal extra customisation to IE	It's just IE with an ad in the top panel	www.custombrowser.com
HOTJAVA	★★	Pretty showcase for Java technology	Slow, though not as bad as on the Mac	java.sun.com/products/hotjava/3.0/
INTERNET EXPLORER	★★★★★	For the moment, the king of all browsers	Hard to fault, unless you really try	www.microsoft.com
LYNX	★★★★	The original text-only browser	If it isn't text, Lynx isn't interested	lynx.browser.org
MOSAIC	★★★	Good for developers	Feels old. Is old. Not updated since 1996	www.ncsa.uiuc.edu/SDG/Software/mosaic-w/
NEOPLANET	★★★★	Funky interface replacement for Explorer	Internet Explorer in new clothes	www.neoplanet.com
NETSCAPE NAVIGATOR	★★★★	Wide range of features for hardcore users	Doesn't display pages as prettily as IE	www.netscape.com
OPERA	★★★★	Faster than IE or Netscape	Looks absolutely horrible	www.opera.com
SURF MONKEY	★★★★★	Lots of fun – blowing up sites is great	Designed for smaller screens?	www.surfmonkey.com

*free 30-day trial version available

What all those browser buttons mean

Understanding the toolbar

BACK Clicking this button takes you back to the last page. Click it once and you'll go back one page, or hold to see the last 10

STOP If you decide that you don't want to view a page while it's loading, just hit Stop

HOME This button takes you to the page you viewed when you started your browser

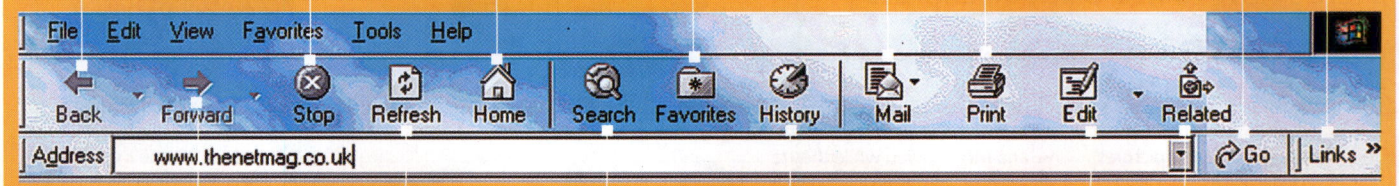
FAVOURITES Pop-up window containing a list of your Favourite sites – or you can view them from the menu

MAIL Opens your email program

PRINT Prints the page

GO When you've entered an address, hit Enter or click here to go to the site

LINKS A quick shortcut to some of your favourite sites, which you can add to



FORWARD If you've used the Back button to move back a page or two, the Forward button should take you back again

REFRESH This makes the browser redraw the page on the screen – useful if you have stopped a page from loading

SEARCH This button opens Internet Explorer's search options where you'll find short-cuts to finding what you want on the Internet

HISTORY Clicking this button produces a list of all the sites visited over the past few days or weeks – so if you found a really useful page two days ago but forgot to add it to your Favourites list, you can easily find it again by looking here

EDIT If you have a Web page editor, you can edit a Web page by clicking here

RELATED SITES Launches the Explorer 'Alexa' plug-in which provides extra search options

Viewing your browser

1 **TITLE BAR** Tells you the name of the site you're visiting and the program you're currently using

2 **MENU BAR** The range of options you can use while navigating the Internet

3 **IE LOGO** Contains a link to the IE home page, in case you're lost

4 **ADDRESS** The address of the site you're opening, including the http:// prefix

5 **GO BUTTON** Click to go to the address you've typed in (or hit the Return key)

6 **WEB SITE WINDOW** The whole page you're opening

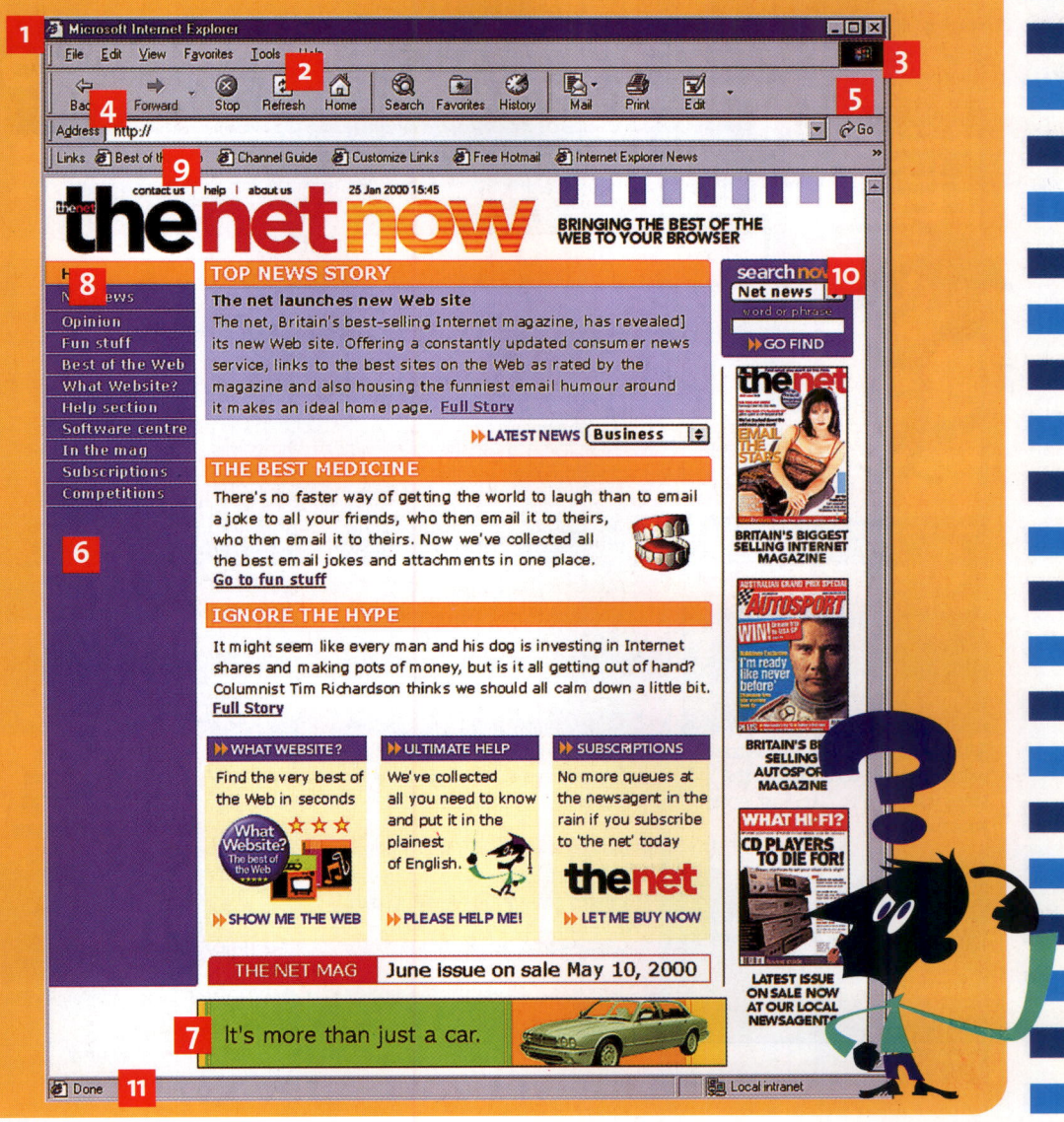
7 **BANNER ADVERTISEMENT** Click here to visit the service advertised in this small banner

8 **INDEX** What you'll find on the site. Click on an option to enter it

9 **TEXT LINKS** Move your cursor to the underlined text and you'll be able to open the relevant link by clicking on it

10 **SEARCH** Will find something specific on the site for you

11 **DOWNLOAD DATA** This space tells you what Explorer is doing – or which site it could open when your cursor passes over a link



Email

Email is a great way to keep in touch. Here's how to use Outlook Express

What is email?

Email is a way of sending messages around the Internet. While early programs could only handle plain text, most can now carry pictures and even video clips and sound.

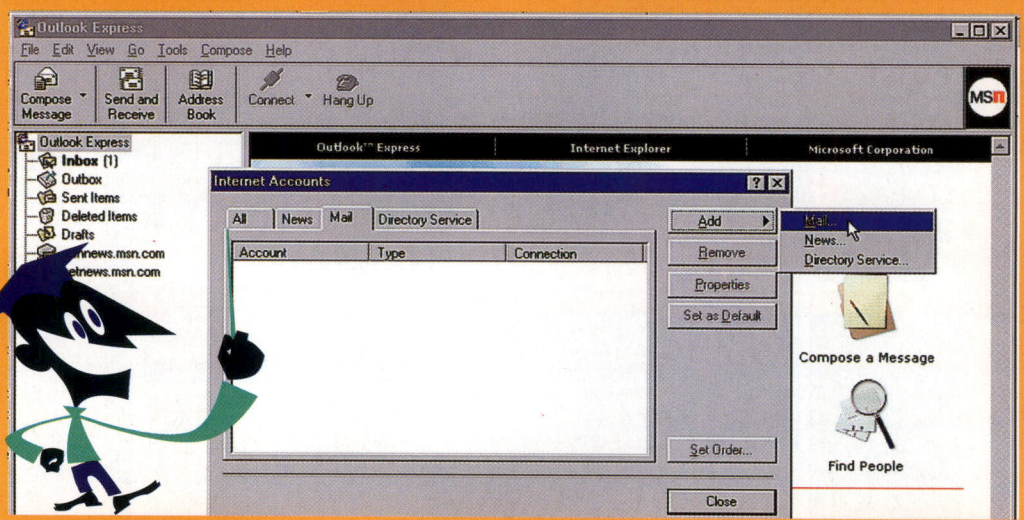
So why should I use it?

➤ It's a lot cheaper to email a friend than to phone them long distance.
➤ It's delivered almost instantly – there's no seven-day wait if you're emailing someone on the other side of the globe.
➤ You can keep in touch with family and friends, even while they're away on business or holidays – they can visit a cybercafé and check their mail from there.
➤ Many companies now rely on email as a means of communication because it's much faster and cheaper than ordinary or 'snail mail'.
➤ You can have information on your favourite subjects – whether it's fishing, the stock market, or a TV programme – delivered to your mailbox every day.

Okay, so how do I use it?

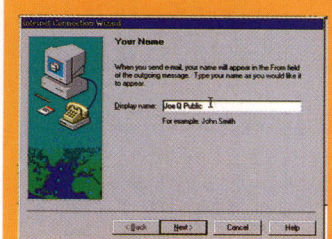
There are lots of email packages, but the one most widely used is Microsoft's Outlook Express. If you've bought a PC in the last two or three years, or you've downloaded Microsoft Internet Explorer for either Mac or PC, you'll already have Outlook Express installed. Our step-by-step guide shows you how to configure the program, create an email message, send it, and then read through the mail you've been sent.

1 Getting started with Outlook Express

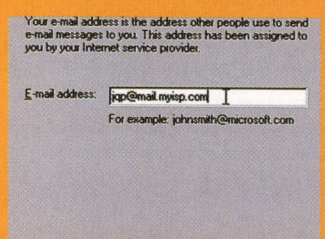


1 From the Start menu on your desktop, click Programs and then Outlook Express. If you are asked where you want it to store messages, select the pre-set or 'default' folder. The folder is kept in the Program Files folder on your hard drive.

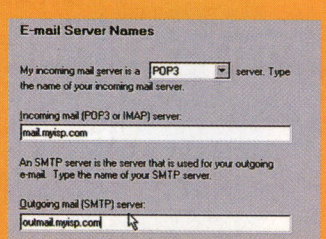
2 Once Outlook Express has loaded, go to the Accounts box from the Tools menu, and click the Mail tab shown in the picture on the left. This will show you any mail accounts you already have set up, and allows you to create a new one. For the purposes of this exercise we are going to create a new email account. Next, click Add, and select Mail.



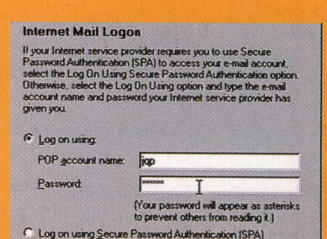
3 The Internet Connection Wizard will now guide you through the steps you need to take. First, enter your full name.



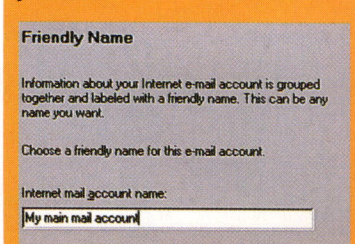
4 Type in your email address. This will have been given to you by your Internet service provider or ISP.



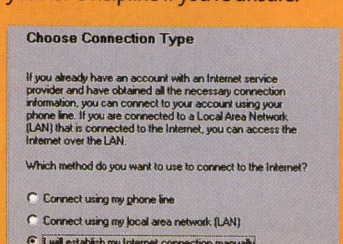
5 Enter the names of the email POP3/IMAP server in order to get incoming and outgoing mail. Call your ISP's helpline if you're unsure.



6 Type in your email address – just the part before the '@' sign – and your password. Again, your ISP should have given you these details.



7 Outlook Express asks for a 'friendly name' to give to your email account. We've called ours 'My main email account' for simplicity.



8 Outlook Express can automatically dial into your ISP for you, but it's probably best to connect manually. You can use Outlook offline, writing and managing your mail and then connect in order to send and receive messages. Choose the 'I will establish my Internet connection manually' option.

MORE EMAIL HELP AND ADVICE @ www.thenetnow.co.uk

- ★ Creating an email address book
- ★ Email etiquette
- ★ Filtering your email messages
- ★ Sending pictures and files via email

BEGINNER'S TIP

Add a 'signature' to your messages. A signature is like a calling card appended to the bottom of your email message. It might contain your email address, full name and phone number. To make one, go to the Tools menu in Outlook Express, choose Options and select Stationery and click on the Signature button. Type in the signature text you want to appear at the bottom of each message.

INTERMEDIATE TIP

Often, you'll want to pass a file to someone as part of your email message. This is known as 'attaching' the file, and is supported by most email packages. Remember that a large file will take longer to send. Compressing it using a shareware package like WinZip on the PC will shrink it, but the receiver the file will need a copy of the same program to re-expand it – so check before you send.

ADVANCED TIP

You can set up several different email accounts. Outlook Express will check each one for new mail when you go online. This is useful if you have separate work and personal email accounts. To add extra accounts, go to the Tools menu, select Options and click on New Account. Go through the 'Getting Started' steps again below, entering the new settings.

EMAIL OPTIONS If you don't want to use Outlook Express, try these alternatives for size

EUDORA LIGHT

www.eudora.com

A very popular, free email package. Includes lots of great features. Doesn't support reading news-groups, but copes happily with 'rich content email' – mail that includes sound, images and so on.

✔ **Lots of features**

✘ **None**

HOTMAIL

www.hotmail.com

A Web-based email program. Gives you a free email address, and can be accessed from any computer with a Web browser. Can also check email from a non-Web-based account.

✔ **Accessed from any computer**

✘ **You need to be online to read or compose mail**

EUDORA PRO 4.3

www.eudora.com

Commercial bigger brother to Eudora Light. Has all the features of Lite, but also allows you to check your mail from several different accounts easily.

✔ **Supports multiple mailboxes, spellchacker, email filtering**

✘ **It'll set you back nearly £30**

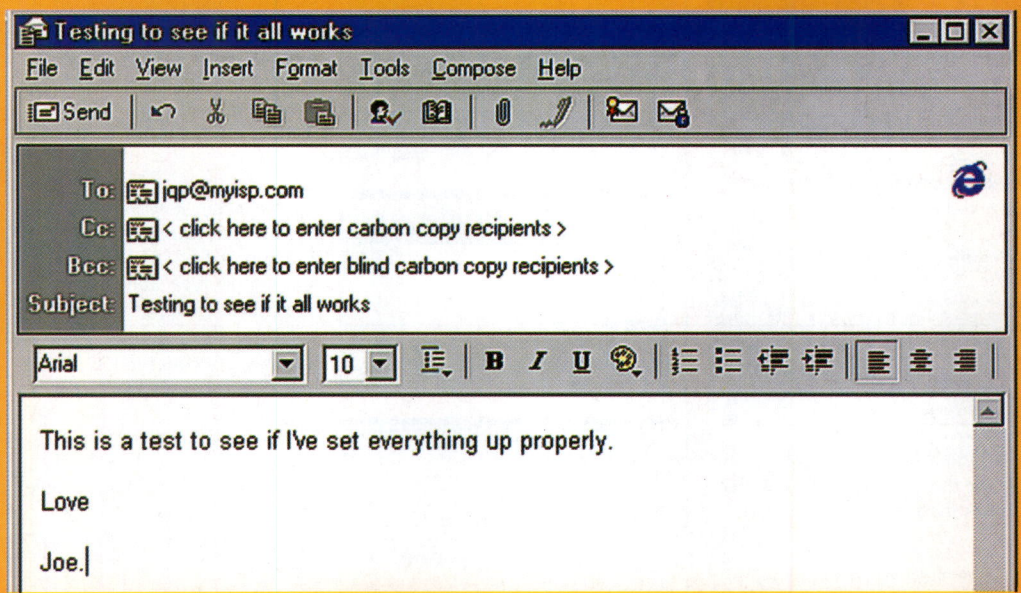
OUTLOOK 2000

www.microsoft.com Commercial bigger brother to Outlook Express. Includes an address book, to-do list and calendar, all of which link very elegantly in to the email section of the program.

✔ **Integrates well with address book, diary and scheduler**

✘ **It'll set you back around £125**

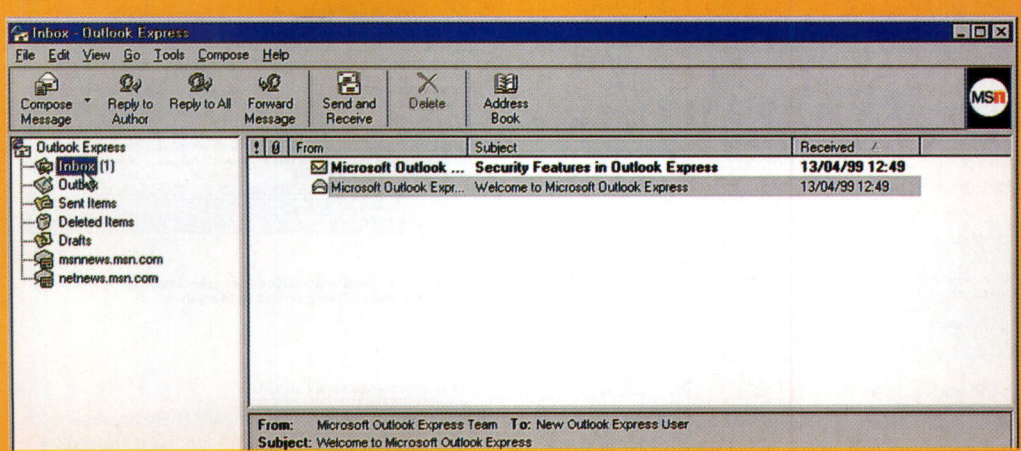
2 Composing your first email message



COMPOSING A MESSAGE

To create a message, click 'Compose Message'. If you click the small arrow just to the right, you will see that there are several pre-defined graphic message templates. But for now, just click on the button itself. Type your own email address in the 'To' field – you'll send an email to yourself to check that everything is working correctly. Enter a subject, for example 'Test Message', and in the body area just type a short message. From the File menu you can click Send to send your message now if you're online. Alternatively, if you're working offline click Send Later. This allows you to create more messages and have them ready for sending when you're ready to log on to the Net.

3 Sending, receiving & reading email



SENDING & RECEIVING MAIL

To send and receive mail, connect to the Net, then click the Send and Receive button. This will check for mail and download any new messages, at the same time sending any outgoing messages you have created. Once the program has stopped receiving mail, you can disconnect from the Net if you wish, to save phone costs. Click on In Box to the left of the screen to access the messages you have received. Click on the message to read its contents.

MORE EMAIL HELP AND ADVICE @ www.thenetnow.co.uk

- ★ Sending your first message
- ★ Newsgroup etiquette
- ★ Members-only bulletin boards
- ★ Web forums

Newsgroups

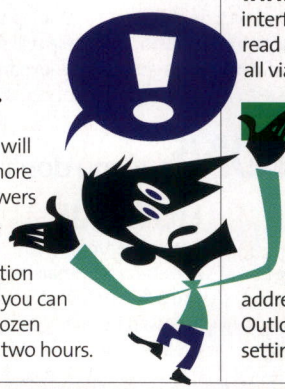
You're sure to find a home on the Internet, whatever your interest. Simply follow our guide to newsgroups...

What is a newsgroup?

Newsgroups are one of the older services on the Internet. Each group is like a bulletin board – anyone can post messages to different newsgroups, and anyone can read the postings. There are tens of thousands of different newsgroup subjects available, so there will be one that matches your interests – whether you're looking for info on beekeeping or book-keeping, computers or comics, sewing or sailing.

Why should I use newsgroups?

Although the Web has plenty of information on most subjects, newsgroups will often have more detailed answers to questions. If you have a specific question on a subject, you can have half a dozen responses in two hours.



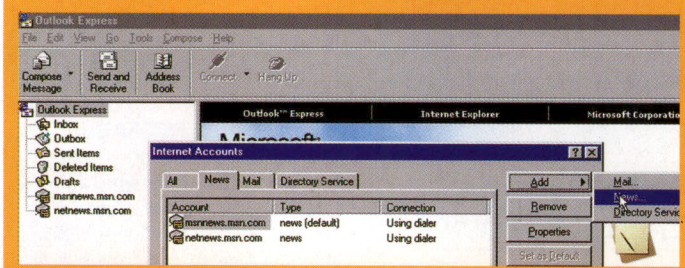
BEGINNER'S TIP

If you don't want to go to the bother of configuring Outlook Express or other newsgroup access software, visit DejaNews **www.deja.com** – a Web-based interface to newsgroups. You can read and send messages from here, all via your Web browser. Simple.

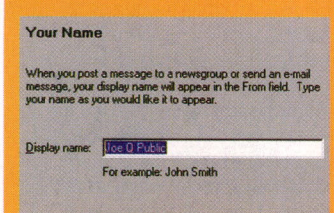
ADVANCED TIP

Your ISP will provide you with its own news server access. Mick's Place at **web.ukonline.co.uk/mick.s2/** has over 50 free access news server addresses. To add more servers to Outlook Express, go through the setting up steps outlined below.

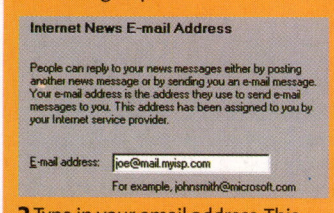
Accessing newsgroups using Outlook Express



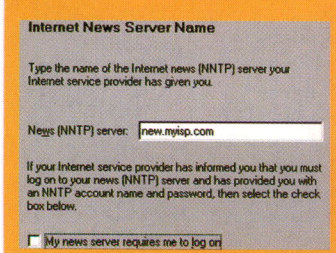
1 Go to the Accounts entry in the Tools menu, click on the News tab to list your current news accounts (if any), hit Add and choose News.



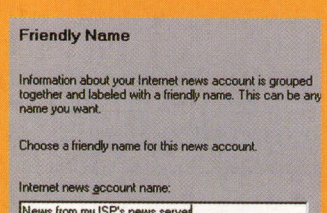
2 Type in your name. This will be displayed in any message you post to a newsgroup. Then hit Next.



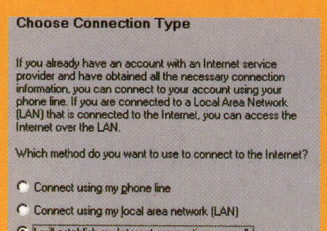
3 Type in your email address. This will be displayed in any message you post. Then click Next.



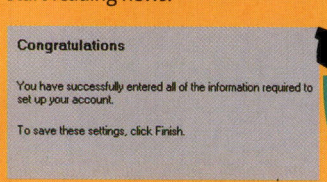
4 Enter the name of your ISP's server which should be given in your user documentation.



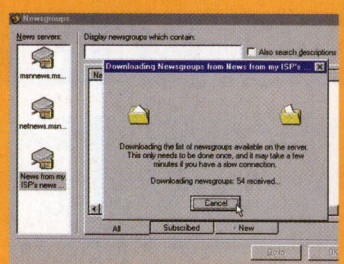
5 Give the news server a name that makes sense to you.



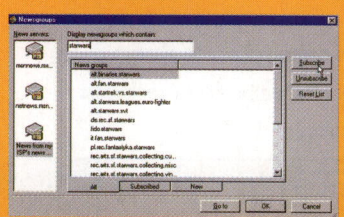
6 Tell Outlook Express that you will dial your ISP manually before you start reading news.



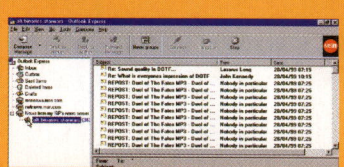
7 And you're done! You have now set up a newsgroup access account. Now let's see how to use it.



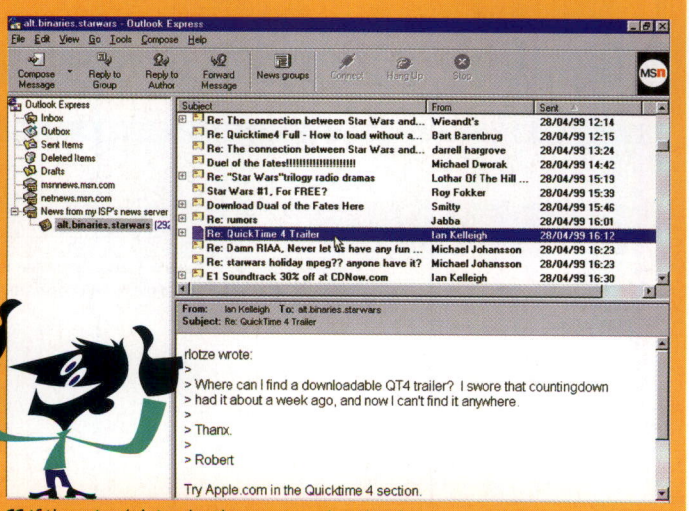
8 After hitting Close, you're asked if you want to download your ISP's list of newsgroups. When you click Yes, the list will be downloaded – so make sure you're online. This can take up to 10 minutes when you first connect to your news server because you are downloading the names of thousands of newsgroups.



9 Once all the newsgroups are downloaded, you can explore. If you want to find *Star Wars* postings, for example, type 'starwars' into the text field at the top of the window to display all newsgroups containing that word. You can subscribe to as many groups as you want.



10 To access a message inside a newsgroup, click on the subject header to read a summary. Double click the header and the whole message downloads, appearing on the lower half of the screen.



11 If there is a '+' sign by the message header this means there are replies to this message which you can also read. Click on the '+' sign to list the replies.

CLICK TO BUY To advertise here call David on 0208 267 5166

thenet CLASSIFIED, CLICK TO BUY

To advertise here, phone
David on 0208 267 5166
e-mail: david.ward-penny@haynet.com

Clothing

SHIRTSEARCH .CO.UK
THOSE NICE SHIRT PEOPLE
HUNDREDS OF READY MADE DESIGNS OR ONE OF YOUR VERY OWN. PUT YOUR FAVOURITE PHRASE OR SAYING ON A SHIRT! NEVER LOSE THOSE WANDERING CHILDREN AGAIN... BUY THEM A FIND-ME SHIRT.
WWW.SHIRTSEARCH.CO.UK

BRASS MONKEYS
fourplay
FOUR SPECIAL NET MAG ONLY OFFERS
(USE YOUR MOUSE HAND FOR SOMETHING USEFUL)
100% british mettle from the home of underwear with attitude
www.brassmonkeys.co.uk/nettitude

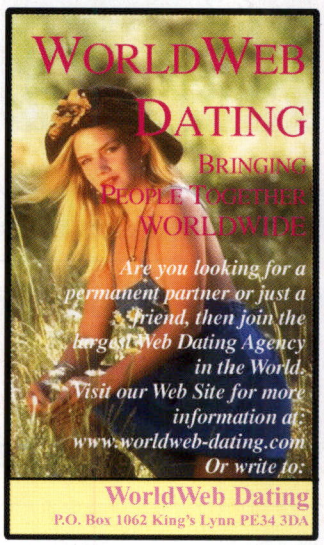
Food & Drink

QUALITY ITALIAN WINES BY MAIL ORDER
from Italian Wines Direct (formerly Magna Vini)
Visit our web site: www.ItalianWinesDirect.com
Or contact us for a wine list:–
Tel/Fax: (Leicester) 0116 2750342
e mail: enquiries@italianwinesdirect.com
Trade Enquiries Welcome

Services

www.proud-to-be-british.co.uk

THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME
DO YOU WANT A PIECE OF THE E-COMMERCE REVOLUTION?
VISIT www.escapebigsmart.com
Or email dhrousha@totalise.co.uk
TODAY!!!



WEB PAGE COPYRIGHT REGISTRATION
HAVE YOU REGISTERED COPYRIGHT ON YOUR WEB SITE; IF NOT WE STRONGLY ADVISE YOU TO VISIT OUR WEB SITE FOR MORE INFORMATION ON HOW TO REGISTER.
YOU MAY ALSO BE ABLE TO APPLY FOR PATENT PROTECTION, WE WILL ADVISE "FREE" OF CHARGE FOR THIS SERVICE.
FOR MORE INFORMATION AND REGISTRATION VISIT:
www.webpagecopyright.com
A DIVISION OF THE PCM GROUP
A REGISTERED COMPANY (EST 1984)
COPYRIGHT 2000 WEB PAGE COPYRIGHT: REG No 000100

SMP St. Michael's Press
St Michael's Press has a long standing reputation as a market leader built on fast service and outstanding quality, together, with very competitive pricing.
Litho, Screen and Digital Printing.
Tel:
0208 670 0137
e-Mail:
nick@stmichaelspress.co.uk
www.StMichaelsPress.co.uk

DANGER MEDIA IN PROGRESS
dangermedia.org

UKparents online
Simply has to be the best site for parents... it has everything you could possibly want.
Come and see for yourself at
http://www.ukparents.co.uk

BE A SILLYCOW

We are here,
Where are you?
Join Dot in her monthly magazine
Read
www.sillycows.co.uk

spyb telecom
ARE YOUR CLIENTS WARY OF PROVIDING THEIR CREDIT CARD DETAILS?
Charge visitors pay as they view access to your website without the need for credit cards.
You can earn revenue from over 30 countries.
A FANTASTIC WAY TO MAKE YOUR WEBSITE PAY
For more info call
0906 - 730 - 5504

CLICK TO BUY
thenet CLASSIFIED

Put it in the back of thenet
Phone David on 0208 267 5166

Travel

75,000 Holidays NOW at bathtravel.com

Magic

MAGIC BY POST
FREE CATALOGUE
100's OF AMAZING TRICKS YOU CAN DO!
Tel/Fax: 0117 977 4334
www.magic-by-post.co.uk

PARIS
A la Car HOLIDAYS
From Only £35 per person
BrochureLine: 01543 483550
BOOK ON-LINE
www.a-la-car.co.uk

Telecommunications

www.bargain-cellphones.co.uk
◆ The Networks
◆ The Dealers
◆ The very best deals
◆ One web site
Bargain Cellphones
Let's Spoil You With Mobile Phone Choice

Recruitment

ENJOY THE INTERNET AND LOOKING FOR A CAREER?

Bedfordshire **£ ATTRACTIVE**

If you have a good knowledge of the Internet and you have the personality and communication skills to build relationships with commercial clients, then read on!

As a recently formed internet marketing company, our client is poised for exciting growth and now wishes to recruit suitably motivated people to become

INTERNET MARKETING CONSULTANTS

Working closely with clients to ensure that their websites continually rank highly on the search engines, the appointees will receive appropriate technical training but candidates must be team players with the commercial and selling skills required to develop the customer base further.

Candidates must be located within commuting distance of the company's offices based near Flitwick railway station. This is an **outstanding opportunity** offering an attractive salary along with the promise of an exciting future. To apply in confidence, please send your CV **(Quoting CR 405)** to: **Chris Randall, Randall Human Resources, Search & Selection, 'Woodlands', Wentworth Gardens, Toddington, Beds LU5 6DN. Tel: 01525 874808.**

Music

discover 6 decades of music history at...
eil.com
the world's premier on-line store for new, rare and collectable vinyl, compact discs & music memorabilia

Pets

PETSDIRECTUK.com

Internet Services

Put it in the back of thenet
Phone David on 0208 267 5166

www.championdomains.co.uk
◆ Domains Names
◆ Web Hosting
◆ Internet Project Funds
CHAMPION DOMAINS
A Winning Name For You

inspired minds
WEBSITE DESIGNERS
SHARE YOUR BUSINESS VISION WITH THE WORLD
WWW.INSPIREDMINDS.COM

e-ssential internet design
www.e-ssential.co.uk
Design • Promotion • Hosting • Domain Name • E-Commerce

KT E-Commerce
FOR £500
All you need to start your E-Business
ktwebdesign.co.uk
0800 074 1031

inspired minds
WEBSITE DESIGNERS
SHARE YOUR BUSINESS VISION WITH THE WORLD
WWW.INSPIREDMINDS.COM

www.virgon.net
Internet Solutions
Domain Names
Search Submission
Web Design
Hosting
Telecom Solutions
Local Call
Freephone
National Call &
Regional Numbers
0800 092 9800
enquire@virgon.net

Chambers Computer Fix It
Full PC Systems From As Low As £600
T: 0208 653 9545
M: 07930 618 508
E-mail: ocfi@shopoffice.freeserve.co.uk
We also do Upgrades and Repairs and Maintenance
www.shopoffice.freeserve.co.uk

name 2 net
www.name2.net
WEB SPACE FOR ONLY £45
5mb web space + cgi bin + any uk domain name
(Inc fees & e-mail forwarding)
SECURE YOUR NAME NOW USE IT LATER
.co.uk = £20 for 2 yrs
.com .net .org = £18.50 for 1 yr
DOMAIN NAME INCLUDING FORWARDING
.co.uk = £36 for 2 yrs
.com .net .org = £26.50 for 1 yr
GET YOURSELF NOTICED

Internet Services

The Best prices in the UK for

INTERNET SERVICES

GUARANTEED

ISP/RESELLERS
Set up your own ISP
yourname.co.uk/com
Unlimited Dial-up Access
Unlimited Pop3
Unlimited Webspace
Server Aliasing
Automated Sign Up Page
CGI-BIN Access
Access to Games Server
Free Tachnical Support
£499 (one off payment)
Log on to: www.velnet.ltd.uk

Business Users
Yourname.co.uk/com
Unlimited Dial-up Access
Unlimited Email Address
100Mb webspace
Unlimited Technical Support
Your Own Control Panel
2 Pop 3 boxes
Unlimited FTP access
£59.99 pa
Log on to: www.velnet.ltd.uk

Personal Users
FREE yourname.co.uk
Unlimited dial-up access
Unlimited e-mail address
10 mb web space
Technical Support
Unlimited FTP access

£39.99 pa
Log on to: wwwvelnet.ltd.uk

FREE

Tel: 08707 440 151 Fax: 08707 440 152
Email: sales@velnet.ltd.uk Web: www.velnet.ltd.uk

LOOK
Com domain names
£13.99

Our price Guarantee
If you can find a comparable package cheaper anywhere in the U.K. we will refund the difference

NO SET-UP FEE • NO TRANSFER FEE • NO MONTHLY CHARGES • NO HIDDEN COST • YOU OWN YOUR OWN DOMAIN

(aq) DOMAIN NAMES

.co.uk's £10

.com's £34

for 2 years
No hidden extra fees

- See our sire for FREE hosting offers!
- Full server stats
- Web forwarding with customer update portal

Go to www.a-q.co.uk
or Tel 0800 389 5815

New! wap site at wap.a-q.co.uk

Netplan Internet Solutions

Domain Names £ 29.99
per 2 years registration !

Secure online regstration process !

no hidden fees !

www.netplan.co.uk

tel : 024 7669 1723

Skymarket Domain Names

£34 + VAT All you pay for two years.

- Domain Name Registration
- Web Site Design
- Dial up Access
- E-mail Accounts
- E-commerce - secure trading
- Web / Email forwarding
- Website renovation / promotion

For fast and friendly service, give one of our sales staff a call on the freephone line. Free, no obligation consultancy and solutions for all your Internet needs.

Sales hotline **Freephone 0800 915 915 9**
Web: www.skymarket.co.uk Email: sales@skymarket.co.uk
Resellers :- www.skyweb.co.uk FREE info pack available

Over 15 million already unavailable

Make a unique marque-
register your domain name **today!**

Instant online name checking for:
.com | .co.uk | .org | .org.uk | .net | .uk.com
.uk.net | .gb.com | .gb.net | .uk.co
Our price includes:
Domain name registration with registry fees paid for two years **plus** e-mail and web forwarding with online user configuration

simplynames

www.simplynames.co.uk Tel:01684 893 020
PO Box 129, Malvern, Worcestershire, WR14 1XP - United Kingdom e-mail enquiries: domains@simplynames.co.uk

CheapNames.co.uk

Our Prices Just Get Cheaper!

yourname.co.uk
FREE Parking for Life or point it somewhere else

yourname.co.uk
WEB Forwarding & E-MAIL Forwarding

£39.00 • NO ADMIN OR SET-UP CHARGES • • REGISTRATION AND NIC FEES INCLUDED • • PRICE IS FOR 2 YEARS AND INCLUDES VAT • • NOTHING ELSE TO PAY - GUARANTEED! • £59.00

ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.CHEAPNAMES.CO.UK
GENEROUS DISCOUNTS FOR BULK REGISTRATIONS
.co.uk .org.uk .ltd.uk .plc.uk .uk.net .uk.com .com .net .org

QiQ
E-Commerce
Affordable and effective E-Commerce websites

- Secure Web Store
- Hosting
- '.co.uk' Domain Name
from £499 ex vat

or include Credit Card Processing
from £649 ex vat

Website
Design
Promotion
Translation
Hosting
Domain Names
Concepts
Analysis

Telephone
01536 507 706
E-Mail
info@qiq.co.uk
Web
www.qiq.co.uk
Fax
07970 570 825

The Intelligent E-Business Consultancy

Brickhouse Internet Services Ltd
www.thebrickhouse.net
Domain Names from £20 for 2 years
Web & email forwarding £10 per year
Hosting from £5 per month
Pay annually and receive a free UK Domain name
'All Fees Included, No Hidden Extras'

DESIGN HOSTS
Tel: 07050 062980 Fax: 0708 936760
http://designhosts.co.uk info@designhosts.co.uk
- Dial Up Accounts
- Hosting Accounts
- Pop3 Email
- Domain names
- FrontPage 2000 Extensions
- Cold Fusion Servers
- ODBC Database Support
- Web Design Services

http://designhosts.co.uk

3 GOOD REASONS WHY MORE AND MORE CUSTOMERS USE LOLLINAMES
- Jargon Free Advice
- Friendly Customer Service
- Unbeatable Prices

DOMAIN NAMES
From £4.99 + fees
.co.uk/.com/.net
HOSTING
15MB £59.99
With free UK domain name
Search + register online
www.LOLLINAMES.co.uk
Freecall
08000 15 16 20

UK Club Names
Domain names, Web Hosting and E-mail solutions for Clubs and Organisations of all descriptions
Oi! is your club on the NET?
tel: 01353 665577
e-mail: info@ukclubnames.net
www.ukclubnames.net

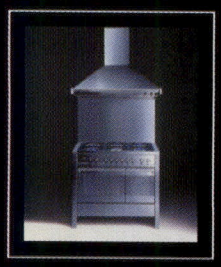
www.thename.co.uk
Special Offer Domain names
• co.uk £15 • .com £38 (Includes 2 years fees, registration, parking)
• co.uk £30 • .com £55 (Includes e-mail and web-page forwarding)
Premium Service £4.99 a month (+VAT)
• 10Mb. web space • cgi + front page extensions • all nominet fees
• unlimited e-mail aliases • Web control panel
* all prices +VAT@ 17.5%
Unique Promise
Customers are ALWAYS registered as the owner.
No hidden or transfer fees • No advertising
Next day set-up or you get webspace FREE
FREEPHONE 0800 091 4343

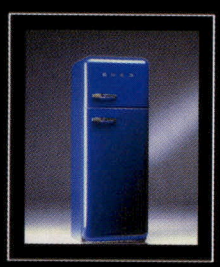
.co.uk £15pa
.com £25pa
UNBELIEVABLE domains £9.85
no hassle
includes:
email forwarding
web forwarding
POP3 mailbox
custom holding page
control panel
no nonsense
nomodo.com
serious about domain names

www.cbsinternetix.co.uk
.CO.UK Names
£15.00
Registration Only Option
£1.50 + Nominet
.COM Names
£25.00
Registration Only Option
£20 includes Internic
✓ Included FREE
✓ DNS Hosting
✓ Email Forwarding
✓ 5Mb Web Space
✓ Unlimited Email Aliases
✓ 0845 Internet Access
Other services include:
Web site design, Website promotion, Reseller deals & e-commerce
01443 408818
Order on-line @
www.cbsinternetix.co.uk

It's your web site host it your way
01302 391888
Domain Names
Email Forwarding
E-Commerce
Fast Servers
Web Site Design
Flash Animation
Unbeatable Prices
www.yourname.co.uk
50 mb web space
Pop 3 mail boxes
FREE dial up access
Unmetered Bandwidth
SUB 100 NET SOLUTIONS
www.sub100.net
£74.99

QUALITY • PRODUCTS





http://smeg-appliances.com

WELCOME TO TOMORROW

http://we-sell-it.co.uk

QUALITY • SERVICE

cameras Direct

Photographic Quality from Digital Cameras

the future is here now!

FUJIFILM

FinePix 4700 Zoom

Photographic Quality

- Produce A4 Prints @ Over 200dpi
- 3x Zoom Equivalent to 36-108mm (35mm)
- Up to 47 Images on Supplied Card
- Powered by just 2x AA Batteries (Rechargeable supplied)
- Easy to Connect to your PC (USB Interface)
- Motion Picture recording 320x240 pixels up to 80 sec.

rrp £699.99 Inc Vat.

Cameras Direct Charter 21 Day Money Back Guarantee

At Cameras Direct we want you to be entirely happy with your purchases. We pride ourselves in offering the very best goods and service. If, for any reason you are not completely satisfied with your purchase we will offer you a refund within 21 days of placing your order, providing items are returned to us in original and unspoiled condition.

Buy from our 100% Secure on line shop

www.camerasdirect.co.uk

Mail Order Helpline ☎01483-306777

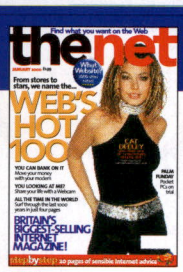
BACK ISSUES

Back issues are £3.50 each inc P&P

Ordering back issues of *the net* couldn't be simpler. Fill in and return the coupon below or call us on our special back issues number:

Credit card hotline

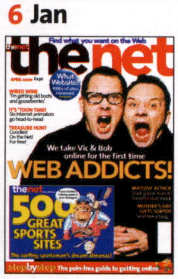
01795 414800



6 Jan

7 Feb

8 March



9 April

10 May

11 June

12 July

thenet

I'd like back issue(s) number (1-12) .....

Name .....

Address .....

.....

.....

Postcode .....

Email .....

☐ I enclose a cheque made payable to ***Haymarket Publishing*** for .....

☐ Please charge my credit card

Amex / Access / Diners / Visa

☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐ ☐☐☐☐

Expiry date. ☐☐☐☐

Post to: the net,

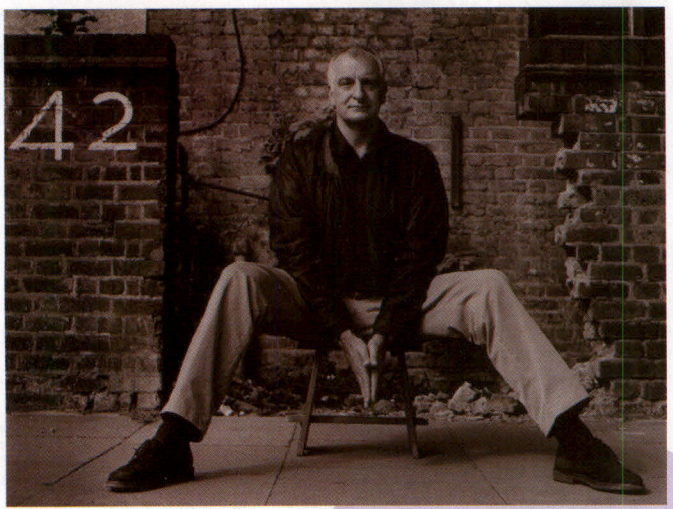
PO Box 280, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME9 8FB

Or call our credit card hotline on **01795 414800**

☐ If you do not wish to receive any further offers from *the net* (or selected companies) please tick box.

DOUGLAS ADAMS

The man behind *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* sees the Web bring his creation to life



Tell us all about your latest project, h2g2...
h2g2 (***www.h2g2.com***) is the online, real-life version of the guide I imagined when I first thought of *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy* back in the late 70s. It's an unconventional and entertaining guide to life, the universe and everything, compiled by researchers from over 85 different countries. It's full of extraordinary information, ranging from how to make perfect scrambled eggs to tips for driving in Paris.

How many people have registered?
About 50,000 people in just over a year, and that number is rising fast. h2g2 looks and feels very much like UseNet.

Are you a fan of newsgroups?
Not really, because the good postings are buried under such a mass of 'noise' that it's really time-consuming finding anything worth reading (though there *is* good stuff on UseNet, once you can track it down). h2g2 is quite different: we're a community with a purpose – to build the guide – which means postings are more relevant, friendlier (especially to newcomers) and of a higher quality than on UseNet as a whole.

Do you ever post anonymously to h2g2?
I have done once or twice, and it's certainly something I'd like to do more of, because it's hard for me to get involved in genuine on-site conversations – the subject always turns to *Hitchhiker's*...

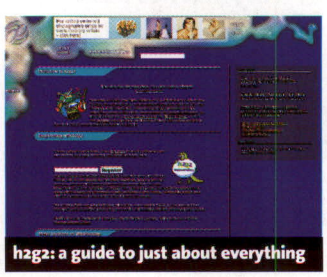
The people who write and edit the entries for h2g2 don't get paid. Did Ford Prefect work for nothing, too?
We'll soon offer rewards to some of the more prolific researchers – credits in h2g2's online shop, for instance.

In another of your books, *Last Chance To See*, you wrote eloquently about the fate of species near to distinction. Are computers going to make humans extinct?
Computers and the Net are merging into the fabric of our lives – just as happened with electric motors some 50 years ago. I've no doubt that once it's up and running, the Internet 2 will become the nervous system of the planet and in many ways, its saviour. In a world of six billion people, we don't have nearly enough inter-personal communication. Hi-tech communications will eventually help make us human again.

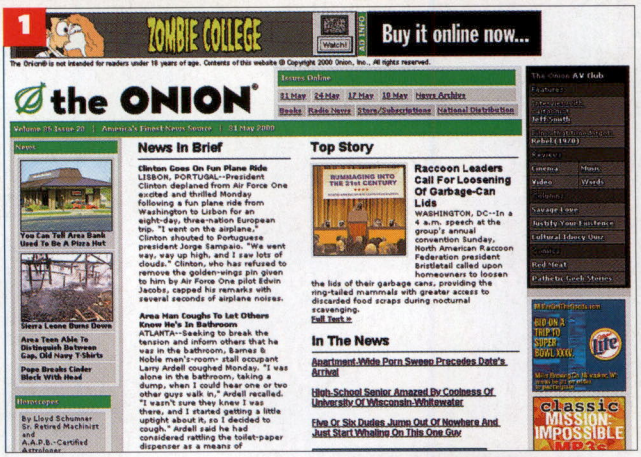
So what's the strangest place you've ever accessed the Internet from?
A boat off the coast of Alaska.

Finally, your Web site, douglasadams.com, claims you're notoriously lax about deadlines. Is this copy going to be late?
Probably.

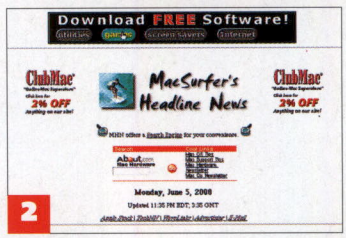
Douglas' copy was on time



DOUGLAS' BEST OF THE WEB



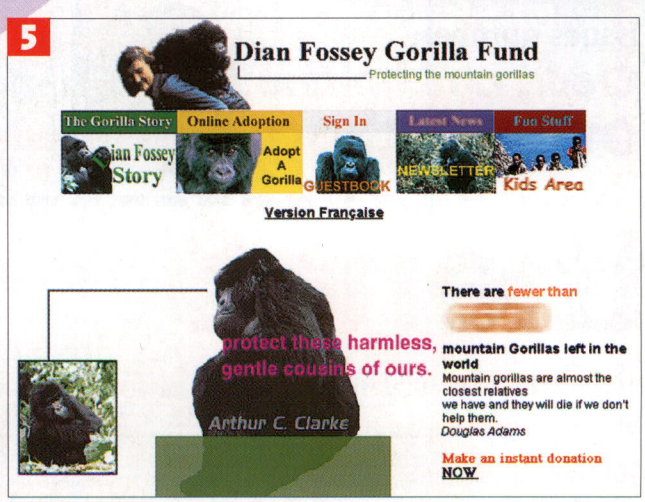
1 THE ONION
www.theonion.com
For entertainment, this is one of my favourite sites. The Onion is allegedly the world's most popular humour periodical.



2 MACSURFER
www.macsurfer.com
I'm part of the AppleMaster Program, so it's crucial that I'm up-to-date with industry issues.

3 SCRIPTING
www.scripting.com
Since I had the idea for my intergalactic collaborative guide, I've been fascinated by the notion of communities. This is a great site from Manila that allows groups of writers, designers and graphics people to manage their own Web sites.

4 SAVE THE RHINO
www.savetherhino.co.uk
I'm patron of the organisation, and I use the site to keep track of their activities.



5 DIAN FOSSEY GORILLA FUND
www.gorillas.org
I am a big supporter of Dian Fossey and her work in protecting gorillas.

ry.co.uk // www.saylingerie.co.uk // www.saygetwell.co.uk // www.saycelebration.co.uk // www.sayg
o.uk // www.sayjewellery.co.uk // www.saypresent.co.uk // www.sayunderwear.co.uk //
cial.co.uk // www.saymum.co.uk // www.saychristenings.co.uk // www.sayfather
l.co.uk // www.sayimissyou.co.uk // www.sayadventure.co.uk // www.say
ww.sayadventure.co.uk // www.sayvideo.co.uk // www.saychampag
aywine.co.uk // www.sayexcitement.co.uk // www.sayiloveyou
v.saycongratulations.co.uk // www.saygadget.co.uk // www
k // www.sayanniversary.co.uk // www.saysorry.co.uk
www.saybooks.co.uk // www.saythanks.co.uk // w
g.co.uk // www.saybemyhero.co.uk // www.saya
ww.sayhappybirthday.co.uk // www.saycd.co.
www.sayyourespecial.co.uk // www.sayflov
v.saychocolates.co.uk // www.saygift.co.

www.saysorry.co.uk

whatever you say... sayitnow.co.uk

gifts and ideas for any occasion

THE WORLD'S LARGEST UK DOMAIN REGISTRAR*

nic names

MAKE A NAME FOR YOURSELF

FREEPHONE 0800 731 4780

UK DOMAINS: £11.50PA

Includes all Nominet Fees

Set-up fee £29 (one off)

FREE LIFETIME EMAIL AND WEB FORWARDING

Use your domain name from day one.
Have it pointed at your free web space and receive email.

100MB COMMERCIAL WEB SPACE, UK DOMAIN: £99PA

Includes all Nominet Fees.
Options for Microsoft Front Page.
No set-up fees.

Clients include Virgin Net Limited, OFTEL, Cadbury, Samsung, MORI, Eli-Lily, Friends Provident

www.nicnames.co.uk

NICNAMES - LEASED LINE ACCESS PROVIDER Established December 1997.
*We registered more UK domains in March, April and May 1999 than any Nominet member.
Prices exclude VAT. All clients agree to our terms and conditions. **Price correct at time of going to press. All trade and service marks are acknowledged.